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ALL THE YEAR ROUND.

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HALF A MILLION OF MONEY.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "BARBARA'S HISTORY."

CHAPTER XXXI. ABOUT SWITZERLAND.

YOUR English match-maker is, for the most part, a comfortable matron, plump, good natured, kindly, with a turn for sentiment and diplomacy. She has, "The Etiquette of Courtship and Marriage" at her fingers' ends; and gives copies of that invaluable little manual to her young friends, as soon as they are engaged. When the sermon is dull, she amuses herself by reading the Solemnization of Matrimony. She delights in novels that have a great deal of love in them, and thinks Miss Bremer a finer writer than Mr. Thackeray. To patch up lovers' quarrels, to pave the way for a proposal, to propitiate reluctant guardians, are offices in which her very soul rejoices; and, like the death-bed hag in the Bride of Lammermoor who surveyed all her fellow-creatures from a professional point of view, seeing "a bonny corpse" in every fine young man about that country-side, she beholds only bridegrooms and brides elect in the very children of her friends, when they come home for the holidays.

Lady Arabella Walkingshaw was an enthusiastic match-maker. She had married off her own daughters with brilliant success, and, being a real lover of the art of matrimony, delighted "to keep her hand in" among the young people of her acquaintance. What whist was to Mrs. Battle, match-making was to Lady Arabella Walkingshaw. "It was her business, her duty, what she came into the world to do." She went about it scientifically. She had abstruse theories with respect to eyes, complexions, ages, and christian names; and even plunged into unknown physiological depths on the subject of races, genealogies, ties of consanguinity, and hereditary characteristics. In short, she constructed her model matches after a private ideal of her own. But hers was not altogether a sentimental, nor even a physiological, ideal. She was essentially a woman of the world; and took an interest quite as deep, if not deeper, in the pairing of fortunes as of faces. To introduce an income of ten thousand a year to a dowry of fifty thousand pounds, and unite the two sums in the bonds (and settlements) of wedlock, was to Lady Arabella an enterprise of surpassing interest. She would play for such a result as eagerly and passionately as if her own happiness depended on the cards, and the stakes were for her own winning.

With such a hobby kept perpetually saddled in the chambers of her imagination, it was not surprising that the sight of Saxon Trefalden leading Miss Hatherton down to dance, should have sufficed to send Lady Arabella off at a canter.

"What a charming match that would be!" said she to Mrs. Bunyon. Mrs. Bunyon was the wife of the handsome Bishop, tall, aristocratic-looking, and many years his junior. Both ladies were standing near their hostess, and she was still welcoming the coming guest.

"Do you think so?" said Mrs. Bunyon, doubtfully. "I don't see why."

"My dear Mrs. Bunyon—two such splendid fortunes!"

"The less reason that either should marry for money," replied the Bishop's wife. "Besides, look at the difference of age!"

"Not more than five years," said Lady Arabella.

"But it would be five years on the wrong side. What do you say, Lady Castletowers—would they make a desirable couple?"

"I did not hear the names," replied Lady Castletowers, with one of her most gracious smiles.

"We were speaking," said the match-maker, "of Miss Hatherton and Mr. Trefalden."

The smile vanished from Lady Castletowers' lip.

"I should think it a most injudicious connexion," she said, coldly. "Mr. Trefalden is a mere boy, and has no prestige beyond that of wealth."

"But fortune *is* position," said Lady Arabella, defending her ground inch by inch, and thinking, perhaps, of her own marriage.

"Miss Hatherton has fortune, and may therefore aspire to more than fortune in her matrimonial choice," replied the Countess, with a slightly heightened colour, and dropped the conversation.

Mrs. Bunyon and Lady Arabella exchanged glances, and a covert smile. Moving on presently with the stream, they passed out of Lady Castletowers' hearing, and returned to the subject.

"Their united fortunes," pursued Lady

Arabella, "would amount to five millions, if not more. Only conceive it—FIVE MILLIONS!"

"You will meet with no sympathy from Lady Castletowers," said the Bishop's wife, significantly.

"Evidently not. Though, if there were really a coronet in prospect"

"I think there *is* a coronet in prospect," said Mrs. Bunyon.

Lady Arabella shook her head.

"No more than there is a crown matrimonial," said she. "I am a close observer of young people, and I know quite well what direction the Earl's inclinations take."

"Indeed!"

"He is over head and ears in love with Mademoiselle Colonna," said Lady Arabella, confidentially. "And has been, for years."

"Does Lady Castletowers know it?"

"I think not."

"And do you suppose they are secretly engaged?"

"Oh dear no! Mademoiselle Colonna, I believe, discourages his attentions—greatly to her credit."

"It is a marriage that would be highly distasteful to Lady Castletowers," observed Mrs. Bunyon.

"It would break her heart," said Lady Arabella.

"She is ambitious."

"—and poor. Poor as a mouse."

If Lady Castletowers had not been a Countess, a Holme-Pierrepoint, and the daughter of an Earl, Lady Arabella Walkingshaw could scarcely have forgiven her this fact. She was one of that large majority who regard poverty as a crime.

In the mean while, Miss Hatherton had found that Saxon could not only dance, but, when the first shyness of introduction had worn off, could actually talk. So she set herself to draw him out, and his naïveté amused her excessively.

"I don't mean to let you hand me to a seat, and get rid of me, Mr. Trefalden," she said, when the quadrille was over, and the dancers were promenading up and down the hall. "You must sit down in this quiet little nook, and talk to me. I want you to tell me ever so much more about Switzerland."

"I am glad to find any one who cares to hear about it," said Saxon. "It is a subject of which I am never weary."

"I dare say not. I only wonder how you can endure this life of tinsel and glitter after the liberty of the mountains. Are you not disgusted with the insincere smiles, and polite falsehoods of society?"

Saxon looked at her with dismay.

"What do you mean?" he said. "The world has been very kind to me. I never dreamt that its smiles were false, or its kindness insincere."

Miss Hatherton laughed.

"You'll find it out," she said, "when you've lived in it a little longer."

"I hope not. I should be very unhappy if I thought so."

"Well, then, don't think so. Enjoy your illusions as long as you can. I have outlived mine long ago; and I'm sorry for it. But let us talk of something pleasanter—of Switzerland. Have you ever hunted the chamois?"

"Hundreds of times."

"How charming! High up, I suppose, among the snows?"

"Among the snows, along the edges of precipices, across the glaciers—wherever the chamois could spring, or the foot of the hunter follow," replied Saxon, with enthusiasm.

"That's really dangerous sport, is it not?" asked the heiress.

"It is less dangerous to the practised mountaineer than to one who is new to the work. But there can be no real sport without danger."

"Why so?"

"Because sport without danger is mere slaughter. The risks ought never to be all on the side of a helpless beast."

"That is just and generous," said Miss Hatherton, warmly.

Saxon blushed, and looked uncomfortable.

"I have not only been over a glacier, but down a crevasse, after a chamois, many a time," said he, hurriedly. "I shot one this very spring, as he stood upon an ice-ridge, between two chasms. I ought not to have done it. I ought to have waited till he got to a more open spot; but, having him well within range, I brought him down. When I reached the spot, however, there was my chamois wedged half way down a deep, blue, cruel-looking crevasse—and I had no alternative but to get him out, or leave him."

"So you cut steps in the ice, as one sees in the pictures in the Alpine-club books!"

"No—I simply tied the cord that every mountaineer carries, round the stock of my rifle—fixed the gun firmly across the mouth of the chasm—and let myself down. Then I tied another cord round my chamois, and when I had reached the top again, I drew him up after me. Nothing is easier. A child can do it, if he is used to the ice, and is not afraid. In all glacier work, it is only the rash and the timid who are in danger."

"And what other sport do you get?" asked Miss Hatherton. "Are there any eagles about the mountains of the Grisons?"

"Not so many as there used to be. I have not shot more than five or six within these last three years; but I robbed many an eagle's nest when I was a boy. Then, you know, we have the steinbok, and in winter, the wolf; and sometimes we get the chance of a brown bear."

"Have you ever shot a bear, Mr. Trefalden?" said Miss Hatherton, intensely interested.

"I have shot two," replied Saxon, with a flush of boyish pride, "and made sledge-rugs of their skins. You have never been in Switzerland?"

"Oh yes I have," replied Miss Hatherton; "but only in the beaten tracks, and under the custody of a courier, like a maniac with a keeper."

"Ah, you really know nothing of the country," said Saxon, "nor of the people. The Switzerland

that the Swiss loves, is that wild, free, upper region where there are neither roads nor hotels, tourists nor guides; but only dark pine forests and open plateaus, the haunt of the marmot, the ptarmigan, and the chamois."

"I never saw but one chamois," said Miss Hatherton, "and that was a poor fat melancholy creature in a cage."

"Of course you never visited Switzerland in winter?"

"Oh dear no."

"And yet that is the most glorious time of all, when the plateaus are all sheeted with snow, and the great peaks rise above them like marble obelisks, and even the pines stand out white against the deep blue sky. It is like a world awaiting the creation of colour."

"What an enthusiast you are," laughed Miss Hatherton.

"I love my country," replied Saxon.

"You need not tell me that. But what can you do in winter, snowed up in those wild valleys?"

"We are not snowed-up. We have sledges; and the deeper the snow lies on the roads and passes, the better our sledges fly along. You should see the Rheinthal between Chur and Thusis, on a bright day in the depth of winter, when the sledges flash along in the sunshine, and the air is full of the music of the bells."

"How delightful!"

"Indeed it is delightful. Then we also skate, practise with the rifle, carve wooden toys, and attend to the winter work of our farms; and sometimes, if there is a wolf or a wild boar about the neighbourhood, we have a great hunt by torchlight. Winter is the time for Switzerland! Ask any Swiss who is not a townsman, and he will tell you the same story."

"I suppose you mean to go back there some day?" said Miss Hatherton.

"Go back!" echoed Saxon. "Why, of course I do. It is my own country—my home!"

"Then if I were to come some Christmas to Chur, would you be very kind to me, and show me some of these winter sports?"

"That I would!" exclaimed Saxon. "And I would buy the loveliest Canadian sledge for you that money could purchase; and you should see a boar hunt by torchlight; and a Schützen Fest; and a wrestling-match; and I would find you a young marmot for a pet. Above all, you would know my dearest father, and if you loved Switzerland for no other reason, you would love it for his sake."

"Your father?" said Miss Hatherton. "I had no idea your father was living."

"He is really my uncle," replied the young man; "but my father by adoption. He is a Lutheran pastor—a miracle of erudition; but as simple as a child, and as pious as an apostle."

"I hear you are terribly learned yourself, Mr. Trefalden," said Miss Hatherton, rising abruptly. "But what is this they are going to do—a waltz? Do you waltz?"

"Try me," replied Saxon, merrily. "It is our national dance—the only dance I ever knew, till I learned these hideous quadrilles a few weeks ago."

In another moment he had encircled the heiress's waist with his arm, and was flying round the hall with her in those smooth, swift circles which no dancers, however good, can execute like the Germans and Swiss. Miss Hatherton was delighted; for she valued a good partner above all things, and Saxon was the best waltzer in the room.

She would willingly have danced and talked with him all the rest of the evening; for Miss Hatherton liked to be amused, and cared very little for the remarks of lookers-on; while Saxon, pleased with her blunt cordiality, would with equal readiness have gone on waltzing, and praising a Swiss life, till it was time to hand her to her carriage. But this was not to be. Lady Castletowers, who, in her quality of hostess, always knew what her guests were doing, was by no means disposed to permit any such proceeding; so she despatched her son to dance with the heiress, and, having sent for Saxon, herself handed him over to Miss Colonna for the next quadrille.

By this time the arrivals were over, and the departures had begun; and after supper was served, the rooms cleared rapidly. By two o'clock, all were gone, save those guests who remained for the night, and of these there were about a dozen.

Then Viscount and Lady Esher, who had brought valet and maid in their suite, retired to the stately apartments prepared for their reception; and the young men all went down to the Earl's smoking-room; and the Colonnas, instead of going to bed like the rest of the guests, repaired to the little study in the turret. They had much to talk over. Mr. Thompson, the liberal member, had brought them information of Garibaldi, and a packet of letters from friends in London and Turin; Miss Hatherton and Mr. Walkingshaw had promised contributions to the fund; and Mrs. Bunyon had undertaken to distribute some addresses, and fill up a card, among her friends. With the Eshers and Lord Boxhill there was, of course, nothing to be done. Like Lady Castletowers, they looked upon liberty as a vulgar institution, and upon patriots in general as doubtful characters.

The letters read, and such entries made as were necessary, the father and daughter rose to say good night.

"You have done nothing yet, Olimpia," said the Italian. "Here is the fourth day already gone."

"I know it."

"I have talked with him once or twice about our country's cause, and he listens willingly; but I have purposely abstained from doing more. The work is yours—why do you delay it?"

"I will not delay it longer," replied Olimpia, impatiently; "I will begin it to-day."

"He is so rich," said Colonna, "and Italy so poor; and every letter we receive is a prayer for help!"

"You need not urge me. Have I not said to-day?—and see, the grey is already in the sky!"

She bade him good night abruptly, and went along the silent corridors to her own room, far away. But the grey had paled to white, and the white had turned to sunlight, before she took the flowers from her hair, or the bracelets from her arms, or even seemed to remember that it would be well to seek an hour or two of sleep. What wonder, then, that when at last she threw herself, half dressed, upon the bed, her eyes looked worn and hollow, and her cheek scarcely less white than the pillow against which it was laid?

CHAPTER XXXII. HOW SAXON IMPROVED THE WEATHERCOCK AT CASTLETOWERS.

"WHAT the deuce can we do to amuse all these people?" said Lord Castletowers to Major Vaughan, as they met on the stairs before breakfast, the morning after the party. "The Eshers, I know, go early, and my mother will take care of the ladies; but here are six or eight men in the house, none of whom are likely to leave before night. What is to be done?"

"Billiards?"

"Well enough for an hour or two; but après?"

"We might ride over to Guildford, and beat up the quarters of those Forty-second men who were here last night."

"Impossible. There are only five riding horses in the stables, including yours and Trefalden's; and I haven't even guns enough to take them out shooting, if there were anything to shoot, except rooks—which there isn't!" said the Earl, in desperation.

"Then I don't know what we can do, unless we put on the gloves; but here comes the Arcadian—perhaps he can suggest something."

The Arcadian meant Saxon. This nickname had befallen him of late, no one knew how. The difficulty was no sooner explained to him, than he proposed a way out of it.

"Let us organise a Volks-fest in the Swiss fashion," said he. "We can shoot at a mark, leap, and run foot races; and invite the ladies to award the prizes."

"A famous idea!" exclaimed the Earl. "The very thing for a bright, cool day, like this."

"We must choose a space of level sward to begin with," said the major, "and improvise a grand stand for the ladies."

"And elect an umpire," said Saxon.

"And look up some prizes," added the Earl. "I will give that bronze cup in the library—it is an antique from Pompeii."

"And I, my inlaid pistols," said Saxon.

"And I. . . . bah, I am such a poor devil," said Vaughan. "I possess nothing of any value—except my sword and my horse."

"The best riches of a soldier, Major Vaughan," said Mademoiselle Colonna. "May I ask why this parliament is being held upon the stairs?"

She had just come, unheard, along the carpeted corridor, and stood waiting, a few steps higher than the trio in consultation. She wore a delicate grey dress of some soft material, trimmed with black velvet, and a little linen collar fastened at the throat by a circular brooch of Roman gold. Behind her, fell the folds of a crimson curtain; whilst, through the uppermost roses of a huge Gothic window that reached from nearly the top to the bottom of the great oak staircase, a stream of vivid sunshine poured down upon her head, so that she stood in the midst of it, in her pale, proud beauty, as if enclosed in a pillar of light.

The three men looked up, dazzled, almost breathless, as if in presence of some glorified apparition; and for a moment none replied.

Mademoiselle Colonna, divining, perhaps, with her fine womanly instinct, the spell by which they were bound, moved a step lower, out of the sunshine, and said:

"All silent? Nay, then, I fear it is not a parliament, but a plot."

"It *is* a plot, signora," replied Vaughan. "We are planning some out-of-door sports for this afternoon's entertainment. Will you be our Queen of Beauty, and graciously condescend to distribute the prizes."

The Earl coloured, and bit his lip.

"Vaughan's promptitude," said he, "bears hardly upon those whose wit, or audacity, is less ready at command. I had myself intended to solicit this grace at Miss Colonna's hands."

"The race, my dear fellow, is to the swift, and the battle to the strong, in the affairs of life," replied Vaughan, carelessly. "But what says our sovereign lady?"

"That she dares not pledge her royal word too hastily. Mine, you know, is not an honorary secretaryship; and I know not what work this morning's post may bring for my pen. Besides, I must hear what arrangements Lady Castletowers may have in contemplation."

"I don't think my mother will make any that shall deprive us of the light of her countenance on such an important occasion," said the Earl. "But there goes the gong. We must adjourn this debate till after breakfast."

Lady Castletowers was pleased to approve her son's scheme, and promised not only to honour the course with her presence at half-past two o'clock, but to bring with her two young ladies who had slept at the house, and were to have been driven home early in the morning. These were the daughters of a poor clergyman who lived about twelve miles off, and, being very young and timid, looked up to the stately Countess as though she were the queen of heaven. Miss Colonna, being urged thereto by Lady Castletowers herself, was induced to accept the royal office; and, although Viscount and Lady Esher were, of course, too magnificent to alter their plans, and drove away behind their four horses shortly after breakfast, the patronage of the little fête promised to be quite brilliant enough to stimulate the ambition of the candidates.

It was a happy thought, and gave ample occupation to everybody concerned. There were six young men that day at Castletowers besides Sir Charles Burgoyne, Major Vaughan, and Saxon

Trefalden. These six were the Hon. Pelham Hay, of Baliol College, Oxford; the Hon. Edward Brandon; Lieutenant Frank Torrington, of the Fourth Lancers; Mr. Guy Greville, of the Perquisite Office; and two brothers named Sydney and Robert Pulteney, belonging, as yet, to no place or profession whatever. There was not "the making" of one really prominent man among the whole half-dozen. There was not, perhaps, one more than commonly clever man; but they were, for all that, a by no means indifferent specimen lot of the stuff of which English gentlemen are made. They were all of patrician blood—all honourable, good-natured, good-looking, manly young fellows, who had been brought up to ride, speak the truth, and respect the game-laws. They dressed perfectly, and tied their cravats to admiration. They spoke that conventional dialect which passes for good English in good society, and expressed themselves with that epigrammatic neatness that almost sounds like wit, and comes naturally to men who have been educated at a great university and finished in a crack regiment, a government office, or a Pall-Mall club. And they were all dancing men, and nearly all members of the Erectheum. Of the whole set, the Hon. Edward Brandon was the most indifferent specimen of the genus homo; yet even he, though short enough of brain, did not want for breeding, and, however poorly off for muscle, was not without pluck.

The whole breakfast-party hailed the scheme with enthusiasm, and even Signor Colonna said he would go down to see the running. Prizes were freely subscribed over the breakfast-table. Lady Castletowers promised a curious yataghan that had belonged to Lord Byron, and been given to her late husband by a member of the poet's family; Signor Colonna offered an Elzevir Horace, with the autograph of Filicaja on the title-page; and the competitors united in making up a purse of twenty guineas, to be run for in a one-mile race, and handed over by the winner to Miss Colonna for the Italian fund. As for the young men, they despatched their breakfasts with the rapidity of schoolboys on a holiday morning, and were soon hard at work upon the necessary preparations.

To choose and measure a smooth amphitheatre of sward about half a mile from the house, set up a winning-post for the racers, a target for the marksmen, and a temporary grand stand for the spectators, was work enough for more than the four hours and a half that lay between ten and half-past two; but these amateur workmen, assisted by the village carpenter and his men, as well as by all the grooms, gardeners, and odd helps that could be got together, worked with so good a will that the ground was ready a full hour and three-quarters before the time. The grand stand alone was a triumph of ingenuity. It consisted of a substratum of kitchen tables securely lashed together, a carpet and some chairs; the whole structure surmounted by a canopy formed of a rick-cloth suspended to a tree and a couple of tall stakes.

Having gone once over the course at a "sling-trot," just to try the ground, the young men returned to the house at one o'clock, furiously hungry, and in tremendous spirits.

Castletowers had ordered luncheon to be prepared in the smoking-room, and there, laughing, talking, eating, and drinking all at once, they made out the programme of the games.

"What shall we begin with?" said the Earl, pencil in hand. "We must end, of course, with the one-mile race, and I think we ought to take the rifle work first, before running has made our hands less steady."

"Of course. Rifles first, by all means," replied three or four voices together.

"Names, then, if you please. Now, gentlemen, who goes in for the bronze cup at eight hundred yards?"

"On what conditions?" asked one of the lunchers.

"The usual conditions. Five shots each, at eight hundred yards; ordinary Enfield rifle; Wimbledon scoring; that is to say, outer, two; centre, three; bull's-eye, four."

"Eight hundred's rather long practice for outsiders," said another man, immersed at the moment in chicken-pie.

"If we had small bores, I should put it down at a thousand," replied the Earl; "but there's only one in the house."

The man in the pie was heard to mutter something unintelligible about the abundance of great bores; but being instantly choked by his nearest neighbour, relapsed into moody silence. In the mean while the Earl continued to canvass for competitors.

"Come," said he, "this will never do. I have only three names yet—Burgoyne, Torrington, and Vaughan. Whom else? I can't enter myself for my own prize, and I must have three more names."

"You may put me down, if you like," said Mr. Guy Greville. "I shall be sure to shoot somebody; but it don't signify."

"And me," added Pelham Hay.

"Thanks. Burgoyne, Torrington, Vaughan, Greville, Pelham Hay—five won't do. I want six at least. Come, gentlemen, who will stand for number six?"

"Why, Trefalden, of course!" exclaimed Vaughan. "The Swiss are born tirailleurs. Put his name down."

"No, no," said Saxon, hastily. "Not this time."

"But, my dear fellow, you are de la première force, are you not?" asked Castletowers.

"I used to shoot well enough when I was in practice," said Saxon, with some embarrassment; "but I'd rather not compete now."

The Earl looked surprised; but was too well bred to insist.

"If you won't," said he, "I must find some one who will. Syd. Pultney, I shall enter you for my sixth shot, and that settles match number one. Gentlemen, the secretary waits to enter names for the second rifle match; the prize for which will consist of a magnificent pair of elaborately ornamented pistols, generously offered by

an honourable competitor who declines to compete. I do not mention the honourable competitor's name, because he is a modest young man, and given to blushing. Now, gentlemen, you will please to remember that this is a solemn occasion, and that the eyes of Europe are upon you!"

And so, rattling on in the gaiety of good spirits, the Earl enrolled the second party. Next in order came the long jump of eighteen feet, for Signor Colonna's Elzevir Horace; then the race of one hundred yards, for Lady Castletowers' prize; and, last of all, the one-mile race for the twenty-guinea purse, dignified by the name of "the Italian Cup," and entered for by the whole of the athletes.

When the programme was fairly made out, Castletowers called Saxon aside, and, taking him familiarly by the arm, led him into the billiard-room adjoining.

"Trefalden," said he, "may I ask you a question?"

"Twenty, if you like," replied Saxon.

"No—one will do, if you answer it honestly. Why don't you put in a shot at either of the rifle-matches?"

Saxon looked embarrassed.

"I'd rather not," he said, after a momentary pause.

"But why? You must be a good marksman."

Saxon made no reply.

"To tell you the truth," said the Earl, "I'm disappointed. I had looked to you for a display of skill, and expected something brilliant. I think you should have gone into the field, if only to maintain the honour of the Swiss rifles."

Saxon laughed good temperedly.

"Do you really want your question answered?" said he.

"Of course."

"Then wait a minute while I fetch my gun."

He ran out of the room, and presently reappeared outside the window, rifle in hand.

"Look there," he said, pointing to the roof of the stables. "Do you see that weathercock?"

It was a gilt cock, like that which Goethe used to admire, as a child, on the Ober Main Thor at Frankfort; and was just then shifting with the breeze, and flashing in the sunshine like a yellow diamond. The Earl threw up the window and leaned out.

"I should think so," he replied. "I have seen it pretty nearly every day of my life, ever since I was born."

"How far off is it, do you think?"

"Well, I hardly know; perhaps six hundred yards. But you can't hit a thing that blazes like a comet, and is never still for two seconds together."

"It's an ugly bird," said Saxon, bringing his gun to his shoulder. "Don't you think he'd look more intelligent if he had an eye in his head?"

The words were no sooner out of his lips than he fired. Lord Castletowers snatched up his hat, and bounded down upon the sward.

"You haven't done it?" he exclaimed.

"Let us go and see."

They had to go round by the front of the house, and across the yards, to reach those outbuildings over which the vane was placed. At about two-thirds of the distance the Earl stood still.

There was a small round hole drilled through precisely that part of the cock's head where his eye ought to have been.

At the sight of his friend's dumb amazement, Saxon roared with laughter, like a young giant.

"There," said he, "I told you it would be an improvement. And now you see why I wouldn't compete for the cup. We Swiss are always shooting, from the time we are old enough to carry a gun; and I didn't want to spoil the sport for others. It wouldn't have been fair."

LIGHTNING-STRUCK.

It is probably owing to the great increase of publicity that we have lately heard of so many cases of persons struck dead by lightning. These sad occurrences, for the most part, take place on the Continent, and numerous instances are recorded in the continental newspapers of buildings damaged, and individuals struck. Even in England deaths caused by lightning seem to have been more common than formerly.

Among the most remarkable later cases, may be included the following:—A woman at Hull was struck blind; another woman, who was standing in a room talking to her daughter, was struck on the side and leg, the lightning having previously passed through an adjoining house, and greatly injured both it and a great number of articles of furniture. Bell-wires seem to be the usual conductors of the fluid from one apartment to another. During a recent storm it entered a house, and was, by this medium, conducted from room to room, rending things to pieces as it went, and throwing the mistress of the house from a sofa to the floor, who, as the account states somewhat needlessly, was greatly shaken by it. One young woman was struck in a railway carriage, and remained insensible a considerable time. But the most painful case is that of the landlady of the Beehive at Digbeth. She was in one of the upper rooms of her house when the lightning entered it, but, instead of striking her dead, it merely scorched her head and the upper part of her body deeply, and set her clothes on fire. Her husband was the first to enter the room where she was lying, and there was still sufficient life in her to enable her to recognise him. About the same time that this happened, though at a place so far distant as Coray, in the department of Finisterre, five men, working in a field, were struck dead at the same moment, and ten others severely injured.

Within a few days two gendarmes were struck dead as they were hastening to get shelter from a thunderstorm. They were running to overtake a postman, who, like themselves, was looking about for shelter, and had just reached him, when one of them turned his head towards a

woman by the roadside who was tending sheep, and said, "Are you not afraid of the lightning?" The words were scarcely out of his mouth when a broad flash came down upon all four, killing the gendarmes, and stunning the postman and the woman; but doing them no more serious injury. One of the gendarmes was completely stripped; the fluid struck him on the back of his head and ran down to his feet, burning his clothes to tinder, tearing his boots to bits, and driving his spurs and his porte-monnaie a distance of several yards. His comrade had no external mark beyond a slight wound on the under lip. A curious circumstance is recorded by the journal which gives the account of their burial: One of the gendarmes did not belong to the Catholic Church, and therefore was buried in unconsecrated ground; but his comrade, who was interred in the churchyard, was laid on its very verge, so that their graves should be brought side by side.

A wonderfully narrow escape from death was experienced by a sentinel who was on guard at Chatham; his face was scorched, and he was quite unable to articulate for upwards of an hour. The lightning struck the sword he was wearing, perforated a round hole, melted about two inches of the edge, and soldered the hilt to his bayonet. It also fused the lock of his musket and the iron ramrod together. After this it wounded his left foot, completely destroying the upper-leather of his boot. Sentinels incur more than the usual risk on account of the attraction of the arms they carry. During a thunderstorm the best course would be to put their muskets in one corner of the sentry-box, and themselves as far away from it as the confined space will allow, taking care to be a little more careful than a certain sentry near Carignan, who put his foot so near the butt of his musket that it was severely wounded. It was during this same storm that the lightning descended on the church at Villa di Stellone, killed seven persons, and wounded several others, among them the priest, who had not the slightest recollection of what he had been doing, nor could the people, who carried away the dead bodies out of the church, remember where they had brought them from. This was attributed to the effects of the electricity; but it may have been merely the bewilderment produced by the tremendous noise of the explosion.

A curious instance of the effects produced by the electric fluid, occurred a week or two since to two girls who were on their way to the market at Bressuire, with a basket of live fowls slung from their respective shoulders. They went chatting along, when a few great drops of rain, which came pattering down, warned them that a storm was at hand. There happened to be an enormous rock near, which projected over the road, and beneath this they took refuge. Presently, without previous warning, they were half stunned by a loud report, and simultaneously with the report they saw a ball of fire fall into the road a few paces from where they were standing. The only effect it produced on them was as though they had been violently shaken. As soon as the storm had passed over they continued their journey, not a little agitated by what they had seen and felt. It was not until they reached the market that they became aware of the exceedingly narrow escape they had had. On their baskets being lifted from their shoulders, they found that the whole of their fowls had been stripped of their feathers in the cleanest possible manner.

A case has just occurred at Hamoir, a commune in the department of the Ourthe, where a shepherd and almost the whole of his flock were killed. The accuracy of the facts stated are guaranteed by La Meuse. The keeper of the flock was Hubert Wera, the son of the farmer to whom it belonged. The approach of the storm was so evident, that he at once collected his flock and began moving homeward; but, when he had reached a narrow gorge through the mountains, the sheep formed themselves into two groups with their heads pressed close together, and would not move a step further. Wera thereupon sat down under a bush to shelter himself from the storm. His brother, finding he did not return, went to look for him, and just as he got within sight of him, a terrific burst of thunder issued from the clouds, such as nobody in the vicinity had ever heard before. A frightful spectacle met his view: his brother and the whole of his flock had been struck by the lightning. It had descended on his head, torn the whole of his hair off, ploughed a deep furrow on his forehead and down his face and chest, stripped off the whole of his clothes, tearing them to ribands, and all this without shedding a drop of his blood. The iron was torn from his crook, and the handle was split in two pieces. A small metal crucifix he carried was picked up nearly twenty yards from his body. The flock consisted of one hundred and fifty-two sheep, one hundred and twenty-six of which were killed; their wounds being of the most diverse form: some having the head cut clean off; others having it divided into two equal parts. The limbs of some were torn from their bodies; every imaginable form of multilation was to be seen among them.

The authorities of the commune, together with the doctor, hastened to the spot; the latter adopting every means at his disposal, such as friction and artificial respiration, to restore the unfortunate shepherd to life, but all his efforts were unavailing.

They found, on examining the ground, that the lightning had descended in a broad sheet: the space it covered being about eighty yards in length, and sixteen in breadth. A curious circumstance attending this event was that although the misfortune occurred at half-past six o'clock on Thursday evening, on Friday morning the bodies of the animals were in an advanced stage of putrefaction.

On the Saturday following the event just related, two men living at Perrigny, in the Jura, took shelter from a storm beneath a walnut-tree. An explosion was heard, and the

lightning ran down the tree, striking down the two men who had sought shelter beneath its branches. One of them was killed on the spot, without any other mark being left on his body than a slight singeing of the hair at the back of his neck. The other was not killed; but he had a burn the whole length of his thigh, and a jagged wound on the sole of one of his feet.

The Journal of the Academy of Sciences, just published, contains an account, sent by Dr. Chretien, of a youth who was killed by lightning in the presence of his mother and three friends who had come to see him; he being ill in bed. They were sitting close together, when the lightning burst through the window of an adjoining room, scattering the glass in all directions; then forced its way through a wall into the bedroom, striking the sick youth dead, burning part of the legs of the trousers of one of the visitors, wounding the leg of another, and bruising and scorching the woman's left leg. In another case, a man had his watch and money melted in his pocket, and every one of his joints dislocated. But probably the most comprehensive instance occurred at Venice, in the theatre. The audience may have been about six hundred in number, when the electric fluid descended upon the theatre in such quantity that it put out the lights, killed several persons, scorched others, melted earrings, splitting the stones, melted watch-cases, snatched a fiddle out of the hands of one of the musicians and tore it to splinters, fortunately without wounding the owner.

Though the number of persons killed by a single flash of lightning may have been greater, there is probably not many instances on record of its having covered so great an area as in a family at Eastbourne. The coachman and butler were outside the house. The former was struck dead, and the latter was so much affected by the shock, that, without being hardly conscious of what he was doing, he went into the house. Here he found his master insensible, and, as it turned out, very much hurt on the left side. In the pantry he found the footman lying dead on the floor; and a further examination of the house showed that the lightning had been through all parts of it. Everywhere the windows were broken, looking-glasses shattered, articles of furniture torn to splinters, cornices and ceilings cracked, bell-wires melted, and so forth. The owner's daughter had a wonderful escape. The electric stream entered the room where she was dressing, and splintered the bed she had just left, besides doing other damage. It is evident that this was not a case of a small stream passing from one object to another, inasmuch as the coachman was struck dead outside the building. But, large as the area was over which this extended, it was not equal to that at Reichenbach, which town was fired in so many places, that the inhabitants had the greatest difficulty in escaping into the country, without being able to save any part of their goods; even a regiment of cavalry quartered in the town were unable to save any portion of their baggage.

Two women were struck by lightning in a bleaching-ground at Kirkaldy; one of whom was sitting on a part of the ground a little higher than the rest, holding her infant to her breast. The mother was struck dead, and, as she fell over, the infant rolled from her arms down the hill, but was picked up unhurt. A similar case occurred in the Isle of Wight, where a man who was riding across Wotton Common with his son behind him, was struck dead, together with his horse, but the little boy escaped with a few bruises caused by the fall. Similar capriciousness was exhibited at Shields, where a man and his wife were both killed, while a person sitting between them remained uninjured; at the same time a child lying in bed was burnt to death, and another much scorched; the house itself being set on fire in several places. The death of a woman, and the escape of the infant she was holding in her arms, represents a case that has occurred several times, but the child is not always so fortunate. There was a curious record of instantaneous death, produced by lightning, found engraved on a tombstone in a churchyard in Donegal: "Here are deposited, with a design of mingling them with the parent earth from which the mortal part came, a mother who loved her son to the destruction of his death. She clasped him to her bosom with all the joy of a parent, the pulse of whose heart beat with maternal affection; and in the very moment, whilst the gladness of joy danced in the pupil of the boy's eyes, and the mother's bosom swelled with transport, Death's arrow, in a flash of lightning, pierced them both in a vital part, and totally dissolving the entrails of the son, without injuring his skin, and burning to a cinder the liver of the mother, sent them out of the world at one and the same moment of time."

The appearances presented by persons who have been killed by lightning differs very much. Often, the expression of the countenance after death is precisely what it was at the instant they were struck, and the body is either without any external mark, or one that is only perceptible on a close examination. Much depends on the position of the person smitten, and on whether the stroke is received direct from the atmosphere or through the medium of some object.

The majority of persons struck in the open air appear to have received the shock on the head, after which it has passed through the body and out at the foot, or it has been drawn aside by money in the pocket, or by some metallic object worn beneath the outer clothing. This was so with a tailor who was struck dead in Whitfield's chapel, Tottenham-court-road. He was leaning against the wall, holding a child in his arms; he stooped to put the child on its feet, and had just resumed his position, when the subtle fluid ran down the wall, burnt the hair off the side of his head nearest to it, melted the studs in the sleeves of his shirt, burst the veins over nearly the whole of his body, and riddled his clothes as though he had been a mark for any quantity of small

shot. It would seem, indeed, as though the effect of the fluid on the object struck, depended very much on the ease with which it can pass out of it. Of this we have an example in the case of a gentleman who was smitten dead while riding, without exhibiting the slightest sign of injury on any part of him, and who was, to all outward seeming, in a calm and peaceful sleep, whereas the horse he was riding had deep cuts ploughed into his head and body. A haymaker too, who was working in a hayfield close by, was struck dead without the slightest outward injury, the only indication of the cause of death being a small hole burnt in his shirt where the fluid had passed from his body to his watch, the case of which was melted.

In the case of persons seemingly killed by lightning, too much haste should not be exhibited in burial. Not far from where this is written, five boys were struck at once, one of whom received a severe wound on the right leg. They remained perfectly insensible for a considerable time, but eventually recovered. A man named Locker, who was struck on a down he was crossing on his way to Bath, lay there completely unable to move for several days, though he had the use of his mental faculties much of the time.

Perhaps the most remarkable effect of lightning is that which it has sometimes produced on infirm persons. A man named Donaldson, who had been deaf for twenty years, was struck by lightning and rendered insensible. When he recovered his senses it was found that his hearing was restored. A clergyman, who had been afflicted by palsy, had given up all hope of a cure. One night during a thunderstorm the lightning entered his room, and gave him a severe electric shock. He thought he felt a sensation of relief, and next morning he found that this was not imaginary, but that he was really cured.

The invention of lightning-conductors has, no doubt, saved a vast number of buildings. We no longer hear of large numbers of persons killed in buildings at one stroke, as in Sicily, where no fewer than eighty-six perished; and where, we may observe in passing, the commander of Girgenti, in order to break a thick cloud which he conceived to be a waterspout, had some heavy guns drawn out of the casemates and fired at it; but, instead of having the effect he desired, fire descended from the cloud, and for an instant wrapped the pieces in a sheet of flame, and left several of the gunners dead. Before Sir Snow Harris applied conductors to ships, the case of a vessel being struck was common; and hardly a year passed without the spire of a church being damaged or wholly destroyed by lightning.

A blunt-pointed stick, if used to inscribe characters on a looking-glass, leaves no visible trace behind; yet if we breathe on it, those figures stand out as boldly as though written with pen and ink on paper. A trout taken from a stream and thrown down by the river-side to die, has left marks of its spots on the leaves on which it lingered out its life. Like effects have been produced by electricity: a woman wearing a rosary had an image of the beads imprinted on her right breast and side: another, wearing a gold chain, had the marks of the links burnt on her skin: a man standing beneath or beside a tree on which the electric fluid descended, had the foliage sketched on his chest.

CONCERNING PLUMS AND PRUNES.

If the value of fruits could be estimated by the metaphorical use we make of their names, we should probably hit upon the two extremes by instancing the fig and the plum. When we say, "A fig for Mr. So-and-so," we mean that we don't care a straw whether that gentleman hang or drown. On the other hand, when we hear that good Mr. Such-and-such has scraped together the sum of one hundred thousand pounds, we exclaim with respect and admiration, "Mr. Such-and-such is worth a plum!"

It was not such a golden plum as this that little Jack Horner, of good-boy memory, pulled out of his Christmas-pie with his thumb. Commentators seriously doubt whether it were a plum at all, suggesting that it might rather be dried berry of the Vitis vinifera, videlicet, a raisin, falsely called "plum" by unbotanical grocers—respecting whose plums we may record the paradoxical fact, that it is possible to make plum-pudding without plums; namely, by putting in *one* plum only.

The "plum season" gives us an "object lesson" on the real nature of the agreeable stone-fruit which our forefathers used to write "plumb," as if, from its heaviness when indulged in too copiously, it had some affinity to lead. There are several parishes called "Plumstead" in England; whether they are more stone-fruity than their neighbours, this deponent knoweth not. "He had rather have a couple of eggs than one plum," is an old French proverb, meaning, "He is no fool; he knows what he is about, and takes care of his own interest." They also say, "He is not gone there after plums;" that is, "He is not there for nothing; he is about some secret business." Molière writes, "If I am grieving, it is not about plums." A dark-complexioned person is ironically described as being "As fair as a dried plum after a couple of washings."

When the French, cut off from colonial communication, were ransacking the vegetable world for something to sweeten their coffee with, their chemists contrived to extract from the plum (from the quetsche especially) a crystallised sugar which equalled cane-sugar in every respect except cheapness. Another plum, which grows wild on the mountains of Dauphiny, the Briançon plum, or plum of the Alps, yields a delicate eating-oil, known as "huile de marmotte," which is more esteemed than olive oil. It combines, with great softness, a slight perfume of noyau, which is very agreeable. The

residue, or oil-cake left after extraction, has been tried to fatten cattle with; but the prussic acid contained in it renders caution necessary regarding the quantity given. Cows have been poisoned by it. It may not be amiss to note here, that in case of accident from an over-dose of bitter almonds, laurel leaf, or other form of prussic acid, a weak solution of sulphate of iron is an antidote.

Among the curious names of old sorts of plums, we find the Jerusalem plum, or bull's eye, very large indeed, brownish purple, and more square than round; the bull's heart, or Saint Loo plum, one of the very largest, with yellow flesh and red skin; the pigeon's heart, black, large, and excellent, late in the season; the transparent plum, large, light-coloured, and long: so called because, when held up to the sun, the kernel is clearly visible; the cock's kidney, small, late, kidney-shaped, and light yellow spotted with red. Aldovrandi, who was acquainted with everything on earth, mentions not only an asses' paradise, but also asses' plums (Pruna asinina), formerly so styled on account of their cheapness. They are later and larger than, but of the same colour as, harvest plums (Pruna hordearia).

Prunum is Latin for plum fruit, prunus (substantive feminine) for the plum tree, both being derived from *προύνη*, the name by which Theophrastus mentions it. Prunus is an important genus in the class Icosandria Monogynia of the Linnæan system. It belongs to the tribe of almond-like plants, which are themselves included in the Rosaceæ, or rose-like plants. It is composed of trees and shrubs peculiar for the most part to the temperate and moderately warm regions of the northern hemisphere: a few being also found in America, and in tropical Asia. Their leaves are simple, alternate, entire, or indented with teeth like a saw. Their flowers generally appear very early, while the leaves are still but slightly or scarcely developed. To the blossom succeeds a fleshy drupe, whose stone, *not* wrinkled (distinguishing it from a peach), contains a single seed (sometimes twins).

Linnæus's genus plum, therefore, comprises the true plums, the apricots, and the cherries, of which Tournefort made three distinct genera. He even subdivided the latter into two; the cherries proper, and the laurel cherries. Jussieu followed Tournefort's example, which is sanctioned by modern botanists, less, however, on account of the importance of the distinctive characters displayed by the three groups, than to make scientific language accord with popular phraseology. The million are indifferent about botanical niceties and floral anatomy; but they know an apricot from a plum, and from a cherry, at a glance. An apricot has a downy skin; a plum has a smooth skin powdered with a secretion called "the bloom," which is removed by a very slight touch, and is sometimes imitated by arrow-root. A cherry has a smooth shining skin, like a maiden's lip, and grows on a longer stalk than either of the former. There is no cherry with the down of an apricot, or the bloom of a plum; and vice versâ. The plum differs from the others in having fruit green when ripe. There is no green ripe apricot or cherry; but there is—it makes one's mouth water to name it—a greengage; and also a bullace, which acts on the imagination like an acid astringent.

A plum, then, is a drupe, mostly egg-shaped or oblong, fleshy, quite smooth, covered with a sort of bluish dust, containing a flattened stone sharp at both extremities and slightly furrowed at the edges. The young leaves of the tree are rolled or twisted when they first appear. The flowers, solitary or in couples, proceed from buds special to themselves, at the same time with, or before, the leaves. The wild plum of Europe, Prunus spinosa, familiar as the blackthorn or sloe-bush, has numerous thorny branches, which ramify at almost right angles. Its white blossoms appear so early in spring, that Cobbett happily styled the stormy time of their appearance "the blackthorn winter." Its small, blue-black, almost globular fruit, is too astringent to be eaten, although early frosts slightly soften its flavour and develop a sugary principle. In that condition, it is certainly employed in France (we say nothing of England) to flavour and colour wines of inferior quality. The poor also make a wretched beverage by fermenting crushed sloes in a certain quantity of water. The sloe likewise furnishes a very strong vinegar; frosted sloes, prepared like tamarinds, are not a bad substitute for that Indian preserve. The bark of the blackthorn is bitter, astringent, antifebrile, and is, in fact, the most powerful indigenous febrifuge, coming nearer to Peruvian bark than any other native succedaneum. For this purpose, it should be peeled in spring from branches of four or five years' growth, and dried slowly to be kept for use. It contains sufficient tannin to serve for leather-making and for dyeing. An infusion of sloe-leaves gives a humble imitation of tea; the drinker's fancy is at liberty to decide whether the bohea or the gunpowder flavour be predominant. During the high price of the China article, British foliage was liberally mixed with it. The wood of the blackthorn is hard and durable. Capital walking-sticks are made from the vigorous suckers which the bush throws up in considerable abundance. A blackthorn hedge is efficient, and lasts long with proper care, although it be less rapid in growth, and less pleasing both in verdure and in blossom, than one of white thorn—i.e. hawthorn. Who would guess that so many uses could be drawn from the stunted sloe-bush on which we look scornfully as it struggles for life on the skirts of a common?

The garden plum, Prunus domestica, attains the stature of a small tree. Its boughs are spreading, without thorns, and covered with a greyish skin, whilst the older branches are brownish. Its white flowers give birth to a drooping fruit, of sweet and slightly perfumed savour, and of very diverse form and size. While cherries grow on stalks longer than them-

selves, plums grow on stalks shorter than themselves. The number of the cultivated sorts is very considerable; sufficient, in fact, to have been grouped by pomologists into nine grand divisions or races. The most esteemed old varieties appear to be natives of Asia Minor, of the environs of Damascus especially; witness the damson—i.e. damascene. Their introduction to Italy is referred as far back as the time of Cato the elder. But several most delicious kinds have been raised within quite a recent period; and more, we believe, are only waiting to be called forth by horticultural skill. A new ambrosial plum would be as satisfactory a result by hybridisation as a new dahlia, or even a new rose. Brilliant colours, perfect forms, and sweet perfumes are charming, but unsubstantial; whereas a plum, if it will not fill the stomach, will allay thirst and stop a *little* gap. In the central and southern parts of Europe, excellent plums may be tasted—with juicy, sweet, and melting flesh—the exact counterparts of which are, probably, not to be found in England. As an object in view heightens the pleasure of a tour, we may suggest the desirability of somebody's making a tour of plum discovery.

The wood of the plum-tree is hard, close-grained, handsomely veined, and capable of receiving a high polish. Its colour is heightened by immersion in lime-water. The plum-tree, like the cherry-tree, is liable to gumming from wounds; choice kinds are therefore better propagated by budding than by grafting. The amateur gardener may bud for himself; any one who can bud a rose can bud a plum; and ladies can amuse themselves by performing the operation all the more fearlessly, as there are no hooked thorns to be battled with. It is a real satisfaction, as the writer can testify, to eat plums or cherries from a bud one has oneself inserted.

Stocks for budding are obtained either by sowing the stones (previously laid in heaps, with earth or sand), or by the suckers thrown up by old-established trees. Seedlings produce much the stronger and longer-lived specimens, but of slow growth during the first few years; nurserymen, consequently, often prefer to make use of suckers, which come to market more rapidly, but which make inferior fruit-trees in the long run. The amateur gardener, who can afford to wait, will make a point of having none but seedling stocks, if for no other reason than that plants from suckers give endless plague by throwing up numerous suckers themselves, which must be removed as fast as they make their appearance. Plums wished to be kept dwarf may be worked on the sloe; others on the mirabelle, the magnum bonum, or any other vigorous seedling. The damson is reputed a bad stock, though the coarser kinds may be budded on it. From the middle of July to the middle of August is the best time to perform the operation, taking advantage of any thunderstorm which soaks the earth and causes the sap to flow more freely. Common kitchen plums—as damsons, bullaces, and harvest plums—may be raised from stones or suckers without the trouble and delay of budding.

A good plum is one of the most wholesome and agreeable fruits with which horticultural skill has supplied our tables. Its soft and sugary flavour is heightened by a delicate aroma, which loses nothing by cookery. If its juicy flesh contain no great amount of nutriment, it is at least easy of digestion.

The numerous ways in which plums can be prepared add considerably to their commercial value, and render their culture extremely important in certain districts of the Continent. They are made into preserves of different kinds, both with and without sugar. In the latter case, the cooking process is greatly prolonged, until the concentration of their natural sugar makes the addition of any other unnecessary. By fermentation, alcoholic liquors, raki, and zwetschenwasser, are obtained from plums. Plums also are preserved, like cherries, in brandy; the smaller kinds, as the mirabelle, being preferred for the making of plum-brandy.

Dried plums (known here as French plums, as *pruneaux* in France) are slowly and carefully desiccated, in the sunshine and in an oven alternately. Lately, special ovens and apparatus have been contrived, which hasten the operation and render it more certain. Dried plums are the object of a considerable trade in different parts of France, particularly in the Touraine and the Agenois. In the latter province, the grand centre of production is Villeneuve d'Agen, and especially the cantons of Clairac and St. Livrade; so that the title "pruneaux d'Agen" is based on an exactitude. In those localities the culture of the plum takes the lead of all other husbandry. The varieties principally employed for drying are the prune robe de sergeant and the prune de roi. The department of the Var, and notably the town of Brignolles, are likewise celebrated for the dried plums with which they regale all the north of Europe.

It is a pity that so few things on this earth should be perfect. A small tree, of convenient height, needing little care, capable of resisting our severest winters, which *can* (if circumstances allow it to do so) annually supply a crop of luscious fruit, which crop continues to be supplied by the different varieties in long succession, from the beginning of July to the end of November, surely approaches perfection as a hardy fruit-tree. And yet it is very far from perfect. One little peculiarity of its constitution often renders all its other good qualities unavailing. Its time of flowering is so early, that not unfrequently its blossoms are completely cut off by frosts, before the leaves have had time to come forth and protect them. So early, indeed, do they come, that several kinds are worth planting (the mirabelles, for instance) merely *as flowering shrubs*, for the sake of the brilliant standard of white which they display while all around them is bare, leaving any chance of fruit entirely out of consideration.

To obviate the consequences of such early blooming, we make wall-trees of choice varieties

of plum. But even a south wall is an ineffectual protection against the heavy hoar-frosts and late snow-storms which occasionally occur even in May. Morning frosts in June are far from rare; but, by that time, the well-developed leaves are able to shelter the young fruit. The genius of Thomas Rivers invented orchard-houses and the plan of growing plum-trees in pots—a clever contrivance and adaptation especially suitable and convenient for small gardens and suburban villas. Respecting the results so obtained, experience is contradictory: some have had decided success, while others complain of considerable failure. But it is not illogical to hold to the opinion that, if one man has succeeded, all men may.

Perhaps, the true plum orchard, for England, may be yet to be invented—a sort of adaptive Crystal Palace, to be placed, say in February, over trees planted in the open ground, with Venetian ventilators capable of putting the plants almost in the open air during a great part of the day, and entirely removable when all danger of frost is over. The practical difficulty lies in this: foliage grown under shelter is much more tender than that which expands naturally in the open air; and unless air and direct sunshine are very gradually admitted, the leaves will be shrivelled, scorched, torn by winds, or otherwise sufficiently injured to spoil the ripening of the fruit, injure the health of the trees, and ultimately kill them, converting the plum-paradise into a desert. To those who wish to grow plums in large quantities under glass, Mr. Rivers suggests a very simple mode of culture—namely, planting a house with plum-bushes or pyramids, and removing them biennially to check their growth. It is found that, after a few years, owing to their being every season loaded with fruit, they grow so very slowly as not to require removal.

The earliest plum is the cerisette, of which there are red and yellow varieties. It opens clean, like the damson, leaving the stone loose and free, and is good though wild—i.e. self-sown, or raised from stones. The mirabelle is an early sort of small light-coloured plum, which bears abundantly (weather permitting), is quite a free-stone, and tolerably sweet. It is excellent in jam, having an aromatic flavour, and also as a brandy-plum. But the earliest plums are not the best. Better are those which, hanging late, and protected from flies by muslin bags, become blue with bloom, unctuous with sugar, and wrinkled with age, but far from ugly. The stoneless plum, or Prune sans noyau, is a small black heart-shaped curiosity, opening well, with no stone but only a kernel.

If you think of planting an assortment, here are a dozen useful plums, pretty nearly as they are ready to pass from hand to mouth:

Early Prolific. Monsieur Hâtif, or early Orleans, darker in colour than the common Orleans. Orleans plum-trees vary greatly in the quality of their fruit: if possible, taste the fruit of the tree from which the plants you purchase are budded. Reine Claude de Baray hâtive, an excellent variety of greengage. The greengage, the queen of plums, when true; but, as *tolerably good* greengages may be raised from stones, many inferior sub-varieties, which would be best destroyed, are to be met with in the market. As with Orleans plums, endeavour to bud greengages yourself from trees of whose genuine merit you are sure. Washington, a fine handsome fruit, deserving more general cultivation. Jefferson, which justly excites Rivers's enthusiasm. The red magnum bonum, an excellent kitchen fruit for families who cut and come again. The white magnum bonum, if good and true, and well ripened, has hardly its superior at dessert, with the sole inconvenience that it is apt to tempt you to open your mouth ungracefully wide. Reine Claude violette, or purple gage, nearly as good as the green, and carrying plums into the month of October, Coe's golden drop, to be appreciated, has only to be seen and tasted. "I have had them in muslin bags on the trees, partaking of the flavour of those called French plums, but richer and more agreeable." St. Martin's quetsche. otherwise zwetsche, Frenchified into couetsche, a German damson, in high repute for preserves and liqueurs. Lastly, the blue Impératrice, which should be allowed to hang on the tree till it shrivels. If secured from frost, it may be kept very late indeed.

Besides the above, damsons and bullaces (not to be despised) will grow almost anywhere, even in hedgerows that are not too exposed to schoolboys. In an uncooked state, these minor and tardy plums scarcely do themselves justice. Bullaces bottled, like green gooseberries, are valuable for winter tarts; while the housekeeper who has either bullace or damson cheese, or both, in store, need little envy her who parades a slab of guava jelly.

The gardens of the curious should not be without ornamental plum-trees. Mr. Fortune has introduced several from China, very charming, with semi-double, and also with large double blossoms—white, flesh-coloured or blush, and striped like a carnation. These are hardy, bloom very early—in mid-winter with a little forcing—and make as quaint, delightful, floriferous pot-plants as a lady need wish to have in her boudoir.

THE ZOOPHYTES OF SANDYBAY.

Sages say there are links between every race of created beings. We all know the zoophytes, that unite the peculiarities of flower and animal life. The bat: half mouse, half bird. The eel: at once serpent and fish. The monkey—well, we won't pursue him; the present object is to treat of one only of these marvellous anomalies, the link between fish and woman-kind, the bathing-woman.

To enter fully into the habits of this extraordinary creature, the scientific inquirer should establish his head-quarters, for a whole season, by the sea. Say, at Sandybay, on the Wessex

coast. There, from the first of May until late in October, many fine specimens may be found. What becomes of the zoophytes during the other six months: whether they disappear with the pins, or migrate with the swallows, has never been satisfactorily established. They have been seen at intervals, and solitary, as late in the year as the commencement of November. They appear then, however, to have lost much of their habitual liveliness. They move dreamily through the water. The voice, formerly shrill, and rather harsh, has toned down; and, indeed, these belated specimens bear no more resemblance to the plump noisy animal in its season, than does Pepper's ghost of Hamlet's father to the stout original he represents.

The naturalist has, of course, his cabinet of treasures; and though his practised eyes are quick to detect a certain value in the many specimens before him, he is obliged to content himself with selecting only a few of the best for preservation. Thus, Nan and her pair of daughters are Nos. 1, 2, and 3 in my collection of gems amongst the zoophyte bathing-women.

Old Nan has a heart; albeit it beats, in general, calmly enough in her wide bosom. It is not the little cares of daily life that can accelerate its pace. She has rescued more than one little fisher-boy, who, venturing too far into the sea in pursuit of a lively crab, would have been caught and swallowed by the great tide waves had not the brave Nan rushed after him, and held him fast until the danger was past: emerging after the struggle with the child in her arms, scolding, choking, but triumphant.

If you have time to listen, she will tell you of sad scenes on that dangerous coast. Of the sands strewed with "wrack," of the long processions formed by the awestruck villagers when the unknown drowned were carried up in silence to the church. Sometimes their sorrow has been for their own people; and one rough winter night a bitter cry arose at midnight, when nine fishing-boats were lying wrecked upon the coast, and there was scarcely a house in which there was not one dead.

But there was one night fraught with fearful peril, of which *she* will not tell you—a night when the cries of human beings roused the cliff birds till they shrieked together; when a fishing-boat, with eight souls on board, in the storm and darkness, flew crashing upon the rocks. In a moment she parted beneath them, and the men were clinging for life to a point where the tide must speedily overwhelm them. Their cries were heard in heaven—and by two only upon earth, Nan and her daughter. These two women were watching over the safety of their bathing-machines. They had drawn them up as high as possible, and, each with a lantern fastened to her waist, were searching about for driftwood, when Fan suddenly cried out, "Mother, did you hear that?" A cry to seaward, faint, but still heard above the gale—borne to them, indeed, upon it—reached the ears of both. "It's away to the right," said Nan; "who's out to-night?" "There's Trout's boat, with eight," shrieked Fan; "they left at daybreak; they'll be gone, before we can wake the village; they only cry *like that* in the water." And what followed? The next moment saw them, with their strong practised arms running the nearest boat down to the sea, and watching their opportunity of launching out into the deep. It was not very far they had to go: the cries led them to the sea-surrounded "danger rock," where eight human beings were dying. There was scarcely time to save—for the tide was advancing—nearer and nearer the waves rolled—one had passed over them, and, numbed and hopeless, *all* would have been lost, had the women stayed to rouse the town. Brave Nan and her daughter never thought "to wake to fame," but they did. Refusing all recompense, they begged that the money subscribed for them might be expended in the purchase of a fishing-boat for the rescued men.

Nan had a younger daughter (No. 3); very pretty, but in weak health. For once, untrue to her mixed nature, Nan wished to bring her up to "the land life."

Poor Nan! She had no idea of the conventionalities above high-water mark, and as to bringing up a daughter high and dry, she had not the remotest conception how to set about it. She consulted a fisherman, who, from being afflicted with a complication of disorders, had passed much of his time on shore. He recommended "nets," the making and repairing of which he had himself found to be "a healthy, easy out-of-door occupation, and leading to much cheerful conversation." It was eventually decided, when Bess was about fifteen, that she should continue to wear shoes and stockings, and other mysteries of the toilet unknown to zoophytes, and be regularly employed by the market to meet the boats on their arrival, and carry up the fish.

Bess, was a good, as well as very pretty girl, and the "land life" agreeing with her, she grew strong and well. The visitors to Sandybay, knew her well, and carried off her photograph. They took great notice of her, and by many kindnesses tried to tempt her to take service with them. But Bess was firm in her love of Sandybay, and of her zoophyte relations; she was always pleased and grateful, but she was never to be tempted away. One day, Bess got her feet wet, the tide was flowing fast when as usual she went down with her basket to meet the boats. The blue waves curled caressingly round her little feet. "Come and play with us," they seemed to say. The zoophyte blood stirred within her, and she began to paddle! At last, into the water rushed Bess, laughing and plunging about. Fan, in the distance, with a child in her arms, and in the act of giving it the salutary, though suffocating dip, stopped short—"Mother," she cried, "there's *Bess* in the water!" "Ah! she be coming to us after all!" said Nan, with an immense grunt of satisfaction. And indeed the morning sun found Bess in full costume, en zoophyte. She had cast her basket to the winds, and her lot *in* with the rest of her tribe.

For a season or two, Bess was the delight of the bathers. She had taken like a duck to the water. She swam, floated, and played in it, like a pretty mermaid. The merry little things that crowded daily, spade in hand, to the beach, waited patiently until Bess was at leisure to plunge into the water with them, and would plunge with no one else.

I linger, lovingly, over Bessie's brightest days. I saw her often, that last summer, and always in the water. Her hair was "goldy," as Nan said; and, tucked up or floating over her shoulders, it seemed like a glory about her. She never laid her hands to any of the hard zoophyte work. To Nan she was always the "little one," twice born; for, from the day she took to the water, she became a new child to her. Thus Bess sported all the day—and at night, who ever met with a zoophyte? And who knows half the metamorphoses that go on in darkness, or beneath the moon?

One only glimpse have we of the zoophyte after dark. The night Nan and her daughter were seeking driftwood on the stormy shore, and found eight human lives!

In a retired sea-side village like Sandybay we soon learn the history of its interest and affections. The people are too simple to hide their emotions. They wear their joys and sorows outside with their ribbons, and it is impossible to withhold sympathy from either. Thus the little town weeps or smiles as one human creature.

There is only one race of beings who are not hospitably received at Sandybay, and who are altogether regarded as outsiders. These are the coast-guard. They are invariably civil, and helpful in times of need, but they never obtain the sympathy of the inhabitants. There was no smuggling at Sandybay, still the popular feeling was constantly against them, and they were never regarded as anything better than "them spies." Alas! that one of those pariahs, perhaps through his objectionable "spy-glass," should have lost his heart to the pretty Bess. I never knew her family name, neither I think did he. Nan's husband was drowned a week before Bess was born, and with him appears to have been lost also the family name! Neither does it appear to have been known how or when Dick Harris prosecuted his courtship. *She* had no telescope, and apparently she was always in the water. However, he found a way, and in or out of the water, Dick proposed, and Bess accepted!

Then began poor Bess's sorrowful days. The fine young sailor was a "spy," and Nan and the zoophyte sister looked coldly on the lovers. With her disappointed little favourites Bess played no more. After dipping them with a calm indifference, she would sit idly and sorrowfully upon the rocks, sometimes waist-deep in water, the poor zoophyte!

But Harris, watching her through his glass, took a great resolve. He went in search of Nan. Nan, much put out by his unwelcome presence, prepared herself valiantly for the fight. "Nan," said the young sailor, "give me Bess, and I'll turn fisherman and live amongst you."

Poor old Nan was taken aback. She was prepared for war; but behold the enemy surrendering at discretion! A bold son-in-law, indeed, and one after her own heart! Nan clasped her hands together, her hard face softened, and her voice shook a little, as she said, "Go and take her, Dick Harris, and the blessing of the old mother be with ye!"

The eve of Dick's wedding was a wild December night. He was to be married next morning; but, in the mean time, he and the men were all out upon the beach, drawing up their boats, and talking of a ship seen before dark, and holding, as they thought, a dangerous course.

While they spoke of it, a flash, like lightning, sprang out of the darkness, and in an instant more a message of distress and danger boomed across the sea. Another flash! and again the imploring gun echoed, like a hundred waves in one, among the rocks. The storm was increasing fearfully. A rocket, fired from the coast-guard station, rushed into the air, the strong wind carrying it far inland, but it was answered by the harsh quick tolling of the life-boat's bell, calling the crew hastily together. Dick Harris had left the service, but the man to replace him had not arrived, and he remained on duty as before. He was the first to spring into the life-boat. She was quickly manned, and, in a few minutes, was gliding down the beach, and tossing like a cork upon the crest of the waves. A long cheer broke from the assembled crowd as the brave crew, bending to their oars, shot out into the darkness on their perilous voyage.

For a long while the lantern on the stern was seen at intervals above the waves, but at last the keenest sight failed to detect it, and silence and anxious waiting succeeded to the noise and hurry of the launch.

Come out with the life-boat! Come away into the storm and darkness. It is better than gnawing one's heart ashore there with Bessie and the rest. To be still is torture when dear lives are staked. See how the muscles start from the strong arms bared to the shoulder! The parted lips and heaving chests have no breath to spend in words. The strong excitement gives unnatural strength, and the force of their united *will* carries them, like an arrow, on their dangerous way.

Brave hearts, thinking only of the perishing ship. In their generous haste the men had forgotten their life-belts. They didn't think they would be drowned; or if they did, they would not return.

The firing has ceased; the moon is up, misty and pale, behind swift flying clouds; a dark object, still far off, is discerned in the direction of the dangerous reef. The life-boat is flying on, often full of water, but as quickly emptying again; the men, drenched to the skin, have found breath enough to send a cheer forward to the sinking ship, and a faint cry has come

to them from her crowded decks. They are in time to save! Oh that I could end here! But joy and rest have scant place in this disjointed world, and I can speak of neither here, except as represented by the grave. Let me hasten to the end, the end that has no end—sorrow upon sorrow, like the rolling waves. The life-boat neared the wreck, when a wave, fiercer than the rest, dashing over the reef, filled her and flung her off; but, drawing her furiously back, hurled her so violently against the wreck, that the side was stove in, and she became unmanageable. Some of the men escaped by clinging to the vessel they had risked so much to save, and afterwards, with their aid, she was floated off and stranded on the shore. But two of the gallant life-boat's crew were lost. *Dick Harris and another.*

I thought these eyes of mine, so old now, could weep no more. I thought the old man had outlived his heart, but I see and feel the terrible ensuing scene again. How Bess ran into the water to meet the life-boat, crowded with the saved; but missed her love! She never spoke nor wept, but her face turned white as death, and changed no more, and day and night she waited by the sea, until at last he came. The villagers tell of it still. How with a wild shriek she threw up her arms to heaven, claiming her dead, and, plunging waist deep into the waves, fought with them for possession of her own. Her wild shrieks rang out his death-knell in the night. Nan, always near her, helped her to carry him to a quiet spot, and, covering him reverently with her shawl, ran for help to the village, leaving Bess to watch him. Help came, but found poor Bessie lying beside her lover, a stream of blood flowing from her lips. She did not die at once, but her white scared face grew thinner day by day. And Dick's grave was opened to receive her, according to her wish, long before there were any flowers to lay upon it.

Nan is fading away, pining to follow her "goldy-hair." The zoophyte daughter works for both, but the light went out of her lonely life when her sister died, and she too is wearying to follow "the little one."

O sad, sad, Sandybay, so cheerful and so pleasant once!

UP AND DOWN CANTON.

Canton is a genuine Chinese city, and one of the most extraordinary places in the world. There are four American steamers which ply between Hong-Kong and Canton. They are fast commodious vessels, in fact floating hotels, such as ply on the large American rivers. The voyage occupies about eight or nine hours. Of these, five or six are on the open sea, sheltered mostly under the lee of precipitous bluffs and lofty rocky islets; and the rest, from the "Bocca Tigris," up the Canton river. The fog in the winter season lies so dense over the flats and extensive swamps bordering the river, that steamers have to proceed with great caution, going "dead slow," and sounding the steam-whistle, while the little fishing-junks, which are sure to be scattered by dozens in the way, eagerly beat their gongs, to make known their whereabout. As the steamer ascends the river, a noble stream, some five or six miles broad near the mouth, she gets gradually clear of the fog. The wide marshy flats, and the bold rocks on the left bank, crowned with odd-looking Chinese stone batteries, come into view, to be succeeded by paddy-fields, sugar-cane cultivation, orchards, gardens, roads, and villages, that become, on both banks, more and more numerous, until they blend with the vast suburbs of Canton. Charming little pagodas, and fanciful buildings, painted and carved, the residences of mandarins, peep from the shade of groves, and every village is surmounted by two or more lofty square towers, the nature of which puzzles a stranger, until he is told they are pawnbrokers' shops. These shops are so fashioned for the greater security of the articles pledged, because the broker is made heavily responsible for their safe keeping. The security is meant to be, not only against thieves, but also against fire. Half way to Canton, on the right, or west bank, is a little English settlement at the town of Whampo. It consists of some ship-chandlers' stores, warehouses, and a dock for repairing vessels which discharge their cargoes here, being unable to proceed higher up the stream. Whampo is, in fact, the seaport of Canton, and was a flourishing place as such, till Hong-Kong diverted the trade. From Whampo upward, the river becomes more and more crowded with junks and Chinese boats. Some of the junks, men-of-war, differ from the rest only in being larger, and in having several unwieldy guns on their decks, mounted on uncouth carriages: in many instances with their muzzles not pointed through portholes, but grinning over the bulwarks at an angle of forty-five degrees, like huge empty bottles.

When the steamer has slowly and cautiously threaded her way among these numerous vessels, and dropped anchor, the rush of "tanka-boats" round her is astonishing. These are broad bluff craft, something of the size and shape of the sampans, but impelled chiefly by women: one sweeping, the other sculling with a large steering oar. They close round the ship in hundreds, yelling, screaming, struggling, and fighting for the gangways, till every passenger or article of light freight has left. The women are warmly and comfortably dressed in dark-blue linen shirts and wide drawers; with red and yellow bandanas round their heads and faces. They are often young and good looking, with bright laughing eyes, white teeth, and jolly red cheeks. They are, unlike the "flower-boat" girls, honest and well conducted. Their boats are roofed over, with snug neat cabins nicely painted, and bedizened with flowers, old-fashioned pictures, and looking-glasses. A low cushioned bench runs round three sides, and the passenger sits down pleasantly enough, looking through the entrance,

and face to face with the sturdy nymph, who, with a "stamp and go," is rowing him along, while at the stern, behind his back, another lusty Naiad steers him on his way.

The river divides the great city into two parts; that on the left bank, which is by far the larger, being Canton, and the opposite smaller town "Honan." On the Honan side, a few European gentlemen still live and carry on business, as branches of several firms in Hong-Kong; but the principal European quarter is a fine level plain on the Canton side, presenting to the river a revetted wall. A pretty church and some handsome houses, including the British Consulate, have been already completed within the land, which is called the "Shámeen." It adjoins the portion formerly allotted for the Hongs, or warehouses and offices of foreign (European) merchants, which were burnt down by the Chinese mob before the last war.

At ten in the morning, one day in the month of February, I started from the Honan side, under the guidance of a Chinese cicerone, who spoke a language somewhat better than the gibberish known by the name of "pigeon" (business) English, to explore the city of Canton. We crossed the river in a tanka-boat, and after threading, jostling, and pushing our way through swarms of small craft in every variety, landed at the custom-house stairs, close to a small office in which presides an English functionary, in the pay of the Chinese government. The strand is crowded with mean dirty hovels, in which, and about the muddy road, and on board innumerable boats, packed closely along the bank, men, women, and children, filthy and ragged, were crowding in swarms. We passed a short way up the strand, by some large shops, crammed with clothing and ship chandlery, and striking inland, traversed an open space, scattered with the relics of the European Hongs burnt before the last war: (a space, by-the-by, which Europeans have altogether deserted, preferring the "Shámeen" land, and which the Chinese government appear unwilling to resume, so that it remains altogether untenanted). We then entered the bazaar, or strictly commercial portions of the town.

The day was unusually sultry for the time of year; the streets (so to call passages of six or seven feet width), entirely paved with flagstones, were muddy and greasy from rain that had fallen the day before. The air was stagnant from the confinement of closely-packed and overhanging houses, and heated by swarms of people hurrying to and fro, while an insupportable stench from sewers, neglected drains, and putrid fish and flesh, with a horrible odour of stale cabbage water, pervaded the suffocating atmosphere. I became faint at times, fatigued and heated beyond endurance, so that my estimate of the extent of this enormous labyrinth, through which I plodded for four hours before I could get a sedan-chair, is one rather of the feelings than of the judgment. I walked—stepping now and then into shops, to examine them more closely—and rode in a sedan-chair up one street and down another, from about half-past ten in the morning until four in the afternoon, and had to leave unvisited about half the bazaar, to get a hasty glimpse of a few temples, gardens, and mandarin-houses, before dusk.

The streets are flagged, and about six or seven feet broad. They appear to be innumerable, crossing each other at right angles at every two or three hundred yards. The houses on each side are narrow-fronted, but extending considerably to the rear. There are no windows, for the centre of each front is open, merely consisting of carved and painted frame-work, like the proscenium of a theatre, and displaying the contents of the shop on each hand, like side-scenes. The back is closed by a large panelling, in which figures of gods, men, animals, and flowers, are painted, with a vast deal of gilding and finery. In short, each shop looks like a little theatre. A few houses have upper stories, reached by pretty carved and balustraded stairs. And as every article for which space can be found, is hung up for display, both inside the shop and around its front, the spectator, as he enters the bazaar, feels as if he were diving into an ocean of cloths, silks, flags, and flutters.

My guide was a sharp fellow, who thoroughly knew all the sights of Canton. As he had been often employed as cicerone by the ship captains, he immediately put me down as one of that jolly fraternity, frequent intercourse with whom had given a slightly nautical twang to his discourse. We had not gone far before he addressed me, "I say, cappen: you come along o' me and see jewellers' shops. Here's first-rate shop—number one jeweller this chap—cappen want to buy anything? Heave along!" The jewellers' shops were numerous, and I saw many very beautiful specimens of carving and filigree-work. Some of the shops sold articles of European design, others ministered only to the native beauty and fashion of Canton. These contained many articles of considerable beauty and real taste. The most notable were the "bird's feather ornaments," which consist of gold or gilt head combs, brooches, earrings, and the like, on which are firmly fixed, with glue, strips of the bright blue feathers of the kingfisher (Halcyon Smyrnensis), cut into small patterns, through which the gold ground appears: the whole effect being exactly like that of enamel-work. The kingfisher is not, I think, found in China, but is imported in great numbers from Burmah and India. I asked the price of one skin lying on the counter, and was told half a dollar (two shillings and threepence). The bird was probably procured in India for three-halfpence. Ivory shops are in great number, but the Chinese ivory yields, in my opinion, to that of the Japanese. I went into several porcelain shops, and saw in each ten or a dozen languid-looking youths painting away, slowly and laboriously, at leaves, flowers, insects, and so forth, on plates. Each lad had a small bowl of one colour, and when he had painted in all

the parts of the design intended to be of that colour, he passed the plate on to his neighbour, who added his colour, and so on all round the room till the pattern was completely coloured. The result is stiff and mechanical. There is no attempt at artistic effect, nothing like the beautiful pictures painted in the factories at Worcester or Dresden. Dyers and weavers are numerous. The silk shops are the finest in the bazaar, but their contents are excessively dear, and are not very good. Indeed, the Canton silks are considered by the Chinese themselves to be inferior to those made in the northern provinces of the empire. I have seen silk dresses and pieces from Pekin, brought into India viâ Nepaul, of a quality which I was assured by a competent judge could not be procured at Canton. This was five-and-twenty years ago, and it is possible that our present widely different connexion with China may have introduced a better article into Shanghae, which is so near Pekin. But the Chinese were very jealous formerly about exporting their finest silks, and those I allude to were brought by the members of a mission, sent every three years with a tribute from Kathmandoo to the Emperor of China, as a friendly return present from the emperor to the Rajah of Nepaul.

The Chinese shopkeepers are fat comfortable-looking fellows, with pleasant, good-humoured faces. They showed me their curiosities very willingly, and none the less courteously exchanged a smiling "chin-chin" with me, if I left the shop without purchasing anything.

Tea-shops are numberless. They are piled up with chests such as we see in England, and with open baskets of coarse and inferior tea for the poor. The cheapest kind is made in thin round cakes or large wafers, strung upon slips of bamboo. It partially dissolves in hot water, and is flavoured with salt by those who drink it. Of this form of brick tea I have never seen any mention in the books published by travellers.

There are poulterers' shops, with fowls roasted and raw; and there are vegetable sellers' stalls, and fish in baskets, dead and not over-fresh, or alive in large tubs of water. They were all of the carp family, including réhoos, mïrgals, and kutlas, so familiarly known in India, also several species of the siluroids, called vulgarly "catfish." The fish brought from the sea are salted and sun-dried, and, with strong aid from immense festoons of sharks' fins, set up a stench that it is not easy to walk through.

After inspecting shops and elbowing and being elbowed in the crowd till afternoon, when I was ready to drop with heat and fatigue, my pilot steered me to a small square, flagged with stone, on which the sun shone fiercely. He called it "Beggars'-square," and told me that all the destitute and abandoned sick in the city, crawled, if they could, to this spot, because those who died there received burial at the expense of government. While he spoke, my eyes were fixed upon some heaps of dirty tattered clothes on the ground, which presently began to move, and I discovered to my horror three miserable creatures, lean and covered with odious filth, lying in different stages of their last agony, on the bare stones, exposed to the burning rays of the sun. They came here to die, and no one heeded them, or gave them a drop of water, or a morsel of food, or even a little shelter from the noontide glare. I had seen shocking things of this sort in India, but nothing so horrible. To ensure a climax of disgusts, my guide led me straight to a dog butcher's shop, where several of the nasty fat oily carcases of those animals were hanging for sale. They had not been flayed, but dangled there with their smooth shining skins, which had been scalded and scraped clean of hair, so that at first I took them for sucking-pigs. There were joints of dog, ready roasted, on the counter, and in the back of the shop were several cages in which live dogs were quietly sitting, lolling their tongues out, and appearing very unconcerned. I saw several cats also, in cages, looking very demure; and moreover I saw customers, decorous and substantial-looking householders, inspect and feel the dogs and cats, and buy those which they deemed fittest for the table. The cats did not like being handled, and mewed loudly. "What cappen think o' that?" said my guide. "Cappen s'pose never eat dog?—dog very good, very fat, very soft. Oh, number one dinner is dog!" "And are cats as good?" I asked. "Oh, Chinaman chowchow everything. Chowchow plenty cat. Chinaman nasty beast, I think, cappen, eh?" My cicerone had been so long mixed up with European and American ship captains and missionaries, that he had learnt to suit his ideas to his company, if his ideas had not actually undergone great modification, as is the case in India with those educated natives of the present day known to us as specimens of "Young Bengal."

Before quitting the bazaar, I was ushered into two gambling-shops. These are licensed by the Chinese government, the owners paying a considerable tax. Both were tolerably full of players, and in both the same kind of game was being played—a simple one enough, if I understood it. A player staked a pile of cash, or dollars; the croupier staked a similar one; and then another member of the establishment dipped his hand into a bag and drew out a handful of counters: if they were in even fours, the bank won; if they were uneven, the player won, and the croupier's stake was duly handed over to him—rather ruefully, it struck me, by the banker, who sat on the counter raised above the rest. This game appears about as intrinsically entertaining as pulling straws; but I may have overlooked or misunderstood parts of it of a more intellectual nature. In the first house I visited, the players were of the lower class, and the stakes were copper cash. One man, quite a youth, left the room evidently cleaned out: his look revealed it, and I suppose he went away to the opium shop, the usual consolation of a Chinaman under the circumstances. As we entered the second gambling-house, my guide

informed me, "This rich house. Number one fellow play here—mandarin chap." And truly I saw in the room goodly piles of dollars heaped up before a better-dressed assembly. The game appeared to be the same, and money changed hands rapidly. I "chin-chinned" to the banker and to the company, and was civilly allowed to look on. The room led through a filigreed doorway to another apartment, where cakes, loaves, tea, and pipes, were spread out, and where long-tailed gentlemen were lounging and discussing the news of the day.

Being in want of cash, and having only dollar notes with me, I asked my guide what I should do? He straightway led me to a money-changer's, where I was at once furnished with change for my notes, at par. As this was an unusual accommodation, I asked the reason of such generosity, and was informed that the dollars given me were all light, and that the changer would obtain full weight dollars for the notes by-and-by. I was assured, however, that in all the shops the dollars I had received would be received at the full value; and this I found to be the case. All the time I was in the money-changer's, I saw three or four people telling, examining, and stamping dollars. So defaced and mutilated does the coin become by bearing the "chop" or mark of every banker or dealer into whose possession it passes, that it as nearly as possible returns to that state of bullion which the Chinaman prefers to minted coin. As it was, the only small change I could procure for a dollar was in fragments of silver: in the weighing out of which I was of course at the mercy of the shopman.

A chair having been with great difficulty procured for me, and another for my guide, we were about emerging from the bazaar, when I had the honour of meeting a mandarin and suite. My bearers had just time to squeeze into the entrance of a side-alley, when the cavalcade was down upon us. Funny looking soldiers, with spears and muskets indiscriminately, musicians and drummers or tom-tom beaters, and an amazing figure in red and gold apparel of a loose flapping cut, with a sword in his hand, mounted upon an inexcusable pony—a Chinese Rosinante. In the centre of this cortége the mandarin was borne along, a placid fat dignitary, in a richly embroidered purple velvet and golden dress, seated in a gaudy sedan.

It was a great relief to emerge from the crowded bazaar, pass through the gateway in the massive city wall, and proceed through comparatively airy lanes to one or two Chinese gentlemen's houses and gardens, which my guide most unceremoniously entered, marshalling me in without a word of introduction or apology, and making me feel rather ashamed of myself. These dwellings, as well as the joss-houses or temples, have been so often described, that I will not inflict them again on the reader. Not the slightest objection was raised by the priests to my exploring every part of the temples, the vergers showing the altars, the various images, the cloisters, and refectories, with great alacrity, and extending their hands afterwards for a fee. The only undescribed fact connected with these worthies, which I was informed of, is, that they sell their finger-nails to any foreigner desirous of purchasing such curiosities. These nails are suffered to grow uncut, and attain a length of three or four inches, looking remarkably unlike finger-nails, and forming curiosities much coveted, said my guide, by foreign gentlemen and "cappens." Among other religious edifices, I visited a Mahomedan temple, a singular jumble of Islamism and Buddhism. Extracts from the Koran wore an odd appearance emblazoned on Chinese architecture. There were no priests visible here; only children and begging old women.

Want of time prevented my visiting the camp or barracks of the Chinese soldiers, on the heights outside the eastern suburbs of the town. A large garden, attached to a temple on the Honan side, was the only other object I had time that day to inspect. The garden was principally stocked with orange-trees, also loquats and lychees, hundreds of which were on sale for the benefit of the good fathers, who are supported by the produce of the garden and the contributions of the piously disposed. On each side of the centre walk, beyond a little dirty pond, was a shed, with shelves, on which were ranged pots containing the ashes of the priests ("priests' bones," my guide irreverently called them); their bodies, after decease, undergoing incremation in an adjoining pit. Names, ages, and dates of decease are duly preserved, cut into slabs of stone on the concave face of a semi-circular screen of masonry in the garden. Before leaving the garden I was not a little surprised by the appearance of a veritable magpie, identical, as it seemed to me, with our British bird, that I had not seen for many years.

After guiding me safely to my quarters—for so labyrinthine is every part of Canton and Honan, that it would be hopeless to attempt to find one's way alone—my pilot left me and departed to his own home, which was, he told me, on the Canton side. The language he spoke is, as may be gathered from the specimens here given, not the ordinary "pigeon English" of Chinese servants: a style of gibberish which it is lamentable to think has become the ordinary channel of communication with all Chinamen. These sharp and intelligent people would soon learn to speak and understand better English than such sentences as, "You go top-side and catchee one piecee book"—"You tell those two piecee cooly go chowchow, and come back chopchop." (Go up-stairs and fetch a book—Tell those two coolies to go to their dinner, and return quickly). The good effects of the tuition afforded by schoolmasters and missionaries in China are much marred by the jargon used conventionally, with irrational adherence to defect in all ordinary transactions of business, by masters and mistresses in intercourse with their servants, and by commercial men with their native assistants.

About seven hours' run, in one of the American steamers before mentioned, carries the passenger from Canton to Macao. The mouth of the river is cleared in four hours, and the rest of the voyage is over an open sea, which, with a fresh southerly breeze, is rather rough for a flat-bottomed steamer: the islands to eastward, though numerous, being too remote to check the swell of the Chinese ocean. After running for about an hour along the bold rocky peninsula, at the point of which Macao is built, the steamer rounds in, and, entering a partially land-locked harbour between the town and some rocky islets to its south, anchors in smooth water. The town has a quaint picturesque look. Its old-fashioned houses extend to the water's edge. They are all of stone or brick, covering the face of the bold coast: the heights of which are crowned by castles, forts, batteries, and convents, from whose ancient walls the last rays of a setting sun were fading as we entered the harbour. The inhabitants are entirely Portuguese, Chinese, and a breed between the two. The jealousy of the Portuguese government effectually excludes foreigners from settling; a miserable policy, by which trade is almost extinct, the revenue being derived chiefly from licensing of gambling-houses. In front of the house of the governor I saw a guard of soldiers. They were able-bodied, smart-looking young fellows, in neat blue uniforms, detailed from a regiment in the fort. These soldiers, and a few half-castes, looking like our office keranies in India, together with some strangely-dressed females, in appearance half aya, half sister of charity, were all that I saw of the Portuguese community. The non-military Portuguese looked jaded and lazy, almost every man with a cheroot in his mouth. The town, indeed, struck me as a very "Castle of Indolence."

A SOBER ROMANCE.

I. MAY MORNING IN LONDON.

A SLIGHT shower, fretful and quick as the anger of a coquette, had just washed the pavement till it had become shining as a huge looking-glass. The slates and tiles on millions of house-roofs were glistening like gold. In solitary puddles the London sparrows were flashing and pruning themselves as if they were dressing or a party, while in the quieter alleys the London boys were making little cocked-hat boats of paper, and launching them on the brimming gutters with all the hope and enjoyment of future Columbuses. Butcher-boys in blue, excited by the reappearance of sunshine, dashed down hot streets with their horned trays on their shoulders, as if their customers would die of starvation if the joint were three minutes late. The cabs, which the shower had sent flying to and fro, had passed away into the suburbs, or had relapsed to the quietude of their customary rank and stand. The cascades of ribbons in the milliners' windows, now attired for the day, streamed with gay colours, brighter than ever in the restored sunbeams that shot in through cracks of the striped awnings. The crowd, gathering courage, began again to collect round the Italian boy with the performing monkey by the railings of St. Paul's. Again the costermonger steered his cart, full of flowering geraniums and pinks, hopefully between the Juggernaut Pickford vans and the ponderous West-end omnibuses. Above Bow church a great field of pure blue sky floated between the rolling icebergs of white cumulus clouds, like a huge imperial banner, for, the blue being in the minority, the white seemed sky and the blue cloud.

It had just struck twelve by St. Paul's—a fact which the clock of that church insisted on with sluggish emphasis—when the Colchester coach, on its way to Lad-lane, dashed through the eastward concourse of drays, cabs, vans, and carts, and drew up suddenly at the corner of St. Margaret-lane, which, as every citizen of London knows, is close to the old George the Second's church of St. Margaret-Moses.

The coachman drew up his four bays smartly and with an air, rejoiced to have got through his journey; and the guard, to keep up the spirit of the thing, gave a jovial flourish on his horn, just to let people know the Colchester coach was no common coach, but a real high-flyer, and no two words about it.

The guard got down and tumbled a plain corded box out of the boot, and then a bundle tied up in a red and yellow handkerchief, and then, looking up at a pretty modest fresh-looking country girl, who sat contentedly next the coachman, holding a great tuft of May blossom, called out:

"Now then, Susan, my love, here you are! Take care how you get down; I'll catch you. Don't hurry, my girl, but look alive!"

"O dear! guard, am I there, then, and is this Margaret-lane?" said the prepossessing young woman, wishing the coachman good-by, and getting nimbly and modestly down, aided by the robust arms of the gallant guard.

"No. 16 it is, my dear. Good-by, Susan," cried the coachman; "I'll tell mother to-morrow you got all safe. Jem 'll run with the box. Look alive, Jem! Peacock wants her oats. You'll find us at the Swan-with-Two-Necks. Whist! my beauties! Hey there, Peacock, gently!" Crick, crack.

Poor Susan! She gave a tearful stare at the receding coach, as if it were the last link that bound her to Colchester, and then turned and followed the guard up the dingy and narrow lane, where her new master resided. I refer to Mr. Josiah Dobb, grocer, wholesale and retail, and for thirty years churchwarden of the wealthy parish of St. Margaret-Moses.

"Put a good heart on it, Susan, gal," said the guard, as he shook hands with his charge. "It always seems strange a bit at first in a new place; but Mr. Dobbs is a kind old fellow as ever breathed, though they say he does hold on to the money. Good-by, Susan—God bless 'ee. Be a good girl—you'll soon shake down. If I

can bring up a parcel for you from Colchester now and then, why I will. Good-by, my dear."

II. THE ARRIVAL.

Susan Smithers was a shrewd ingenuous sturdy girl, with some honest sense and courage about her; but she felt rather shy and uncomfortable when she stood at the window of the large dingy wholesale and retail shop, and saw the crane, like a huge gibbet, impending over her head in a threatening and mysterious way. She could observe the bustle and stir inside the shop, where sprightly gentlemen, adorned with white neckcloths (for such was Mr. Dobbs's humour), weighed and packed pounds of tea, tins of cocoa, and parcels of coffee; where the sugar-chopper sounded unceasingly, and orders were shouted to the apprentices, as if the place were a ship, and a storm was looming in sight. She waited a moment or two, looking.

But common sense is a plant that grows just as well in the village as the town, and Susan, being a quick resolute prompt girl, was not going to waste her time standing outside; so she walked in, and seeing a young man with large whiskers and an imposing appearance stooping in front of the counter, and reading the direction on her box, she asked him if that was Mr. Dobbs's, and requested him to be kind enough to tell her the way down to Mr. Dobbs's kitchen. The imposing young man instantly turned pilot, and with a good-natured smile, returning that given him by Susan in mute reply, was entering into the full spirit of the occasion, when, from the left-hand side of the shop, at the further end, there stepped down from a high enclosed desk, that looked partly like a madman's cell, and still more like a pulpit, a tall thin old gentleman, who wore a pigtail (my story dates some twenty years back), a blue coat with bright brass buttons, a yellow marsala waistcoat with a scarlet one underneath (only the edge showing), and a frilled shirt-front, and nankeen trousers. He was the very pink of neatness and precision, was this old gentleman, and his neatness and trimness made him seem quite alert and young. His face was of a pale nankeen colour, like the part of his dress already glanced at, but then it was clear in tone, and about the cheeks healthy blood showed through it. This pleasant old gentleman held a pen in one hand, and jostled his great bunch of large gold watch-seals with the other, as he came up to Susan's pilot.

"Mr. Tompkins," he said, "mind that that tea goes off to Edwards's people this evening. They have written again about it. But who is this? Are you the new servant?"

Susan dropped a pretty curtsey, and said, mildly but firmly, that she believed she was.

The old gentleman gave her a long keen look from under his thick grey eyebrows: a parental custom-house officer's sort of look: and said, "Be a good girl—it's not a heavy place. Mr. Tompkins, take down——What's your name, my dear, eh?"

"Susan Smithers, if you please, sir." (A second curtsey.)

"And I do please. Take down Susan, Mr. Tompkins, to Mrs. Thompson, and tell her to make her comfortable."

"What a nice old gentleman!" said Susan, as she followed her nimble and good-natured pilot down the dark back stairs.

"Yes, he is a good old party. That's our governor."

"O dear me! What, is that Mr. Dobbs? Well, he has a pleasant way with him."

"Yes, that's the governor, no mistake about it."

Susan was very warmly received by her old widow aunt, Mr. Dobbs's housekeeper for thirty years. The worthy woman was very busy preparing dinner, and was up to her eyes in potatoes, which she peeled and tossed into a pan of water as quickly as though she were doing it for a wager. In a very few minutes, Susan, like a good smart willing girl as she was, had taken off her bonnet, and washed her face and hands, put on a clean apron, and was ready to chop parsley and finish the potatoes.

"Susan's a good sort," thought the old lady to herself. "She'll do. She'll be as good as gold to me. And how neat and handy she is, and a tidy looking girl too!"

Together over the potatoes, which one by one splashed into the great yellow pan, the old aunt and her niece chatted over Colchester friends.

"And how is Jane Turner? And is Miss Charlotte married yet? How's brother's rheumatism?" and so on. To all of which queries Susan answered sensibly and sharply. All of a sudden she darted at her bundle that had been placed on a chair near the window.

"O, dear aunt, what a stupid forgetful thing I've been all this time, to forget I brought up some clover turfs for the lark you're so fond of."

"O, how very kind, Susan, to think of poor Dicky! And they *are* nice and fresh. O, they do remind one of the country, they do."

"Let me sprinkle them, aunt, with some water, and give Dicky one now."

"Do, my dear, while I get the meat down, for master always dines at five, and I haven't too much time, Susy."

"Where *is* Dicky, aunt?"

"Why there, dear, by the back door. I put him there to let him have as much air as possible."

Susan tripped to the back door, and there, in a light green cage, found the lark: no longer bright and quick as when sent from Colchester, but dingy, ruffled, and almost tailless, and with eyes that had now become knowing, yet spiritless. It was hopping on a dusty little door-mat bit of withered turf, and was thrusting its little graceful brown head, feverishly and restlessly, like Sterne's starling, through the sooty wires of its prison.

A sudden sense of the confinement and sordidness of London city life gloomed down for

a moment over the mind of the country girl, still untamed by cellar-kitchens, late hours, over-work, and want of exercise. But she cast it aside in a moment, as she would have done an evil thought, and laughed to kill any care or sorrow that hovered near.

Susan's aunt, worthy old Mrs. Thompson, turned to look at her niece, resting for a moment on the dresser the neat fillet of veal that she was about to thrust into a cradle spit.

"That's a good-hearted girl, I'm sure," she thought to herself. "She'll be a comfort to me as I go down the hill. I always found as young people as loves the poor dumb creatures turn out well, and wicey-wersy."

In the mean time, Susan was out there in the little well shaft of an area, busy arranging the turf in the cage, which, sprinkled under the pump, now lifted its green blades and purple tufts of flowers that smelt of honey, and seemed to bring a certain portion of sunshine with them into that extremely "shady" place. The bird, bustling about in his little meadow, had already gathered new life from that pleasant reminiscence of freedom and the country. First, he merely darted to and fro, quick as a rat, and thrust his head in and out of the bars, like the immortal starling aforesaid; but presently darting to the roof, as if with the fullest intention of beating out its brains, the poor little exile from the blue air and white wandering clouds, failing in that attempt, poured forth in grateful gladness a little hurricane of innocent and tender music.

"Dicky is so pleased," said Susan, tripping back and kissing her aunt on the back of her neck, as she stooped over the encaged veal. "And now to tell me what sort of an old gentleman master is. Shall I be servant enough? It is such a grand house, aunty."

Mrs. Thompson sat down with the fillet of veal reposing on her lap as if it were a child, and discoursed:

"He is a very kind, upright gentleman, is Mr. Dobbs, Susan, and it is a very respectable, comfortable place for them as choose to make it so. And the young men in the shop, especially Mr. Tompkins the foreman, are most well-behaved. A little noisy and mischievous the younger ones, but such is life. It's a place, Susan, to be proud of, as I have found these thirty year as I've lived in the parish of St. Margaret-Moses."

The veal began to turn a most delicious light-brown, and to weep tears of fat over its own inevitable fate. At sight of these savoury symptoms, Mrs. Thompson took down from a nail near the clock, an old black bonnet with strings never meant to tie. "I must just run over to Mrs. Peacock's for a moment and get some parsley for garnish; watch the meat, there's a dear, till I return. I want to ask her how her husband is, for he's bad with the rheumatic fever, poor dear soul. I shan't be long. I shall be back by four. Master always comes down at half-past four to wash his hands for dinner, and he's as regular as clockwork. Then he goes out to take a quiet turn in Drapers' Gardens or Old Jewry, to give him an appetite, and just as the clock strikes five you'll hear him knock. Good-by, dear; mind the basting, for that's a perfect pictur that fillet of weal is, though I say it as shouldn't say it. It does look rather dark, but I won't take my umbrella, because the shop is only just over the corner of our lane. Bless me, how that dear bird do sing! It's very nice, but it don't go through your head like a canary do."

With such good-natured chatter the faithful old automaton, ignorant of all country pleasures, and heedless of the joys of liberty, toddled upstairs on her kind errand. The front door slammed behind her.

III. THE AVATAR.

Is there in all the world any object so pleasant to the eye or to the mind (to see, that is, or to contemplate) as a fresh pure girl absorbed in a day-dream, lost in rosy clouds of the illimitable future, aping the toiling thinker, yet merely playing with the kaleidoscope of the young imagination?

How could I hope to sketch those simple day-dreams of Susan's? How could I convey to the minds of others her glimpses of thatched roofs overrun with roses; of kind old faces watching for the postman; of green lanes and tranquil churches, with the yew, which no centuries of sunshine can enliven, looking in wistfully at the windows; the murkier but still luminous scenes from London streets, across which passed processions of cheerful fresh-coloured young men adorned with white neckcloths, headed by smiling Mr. Tompkins? All these motley visions a cuckoo-clock broke up by its warning clamour.

Susan looked up as guiltily at the niddlety-noddlety bird bowing furiously from the clock, as if a policeman had suddenly entered and accused her of some theft. IT WAS STRIKING FOUR O'CLOCK, and Aunt Thompson would be back directly. Fortunately for Susan (everything seemed to go well on this lucky day); the joint had not burnt; it had gone twirling steadily and methodically on, resigned to its fate, and quite at home by this time with misfortune; it was browning and roasting equably and well over the bright clean hearth, basted with its own juice, a patient victim to the fierce white heat of a rejoicing and victorious fire. If there were a brownie who watched over the kitchen of No. 16, St. Margaret-lane, that brownie had been there during Susan's day-dream, attending to the browning of that fillet of veal.

The domestic fairies had been as busy as crickets, stirring round the potatoes, and blowing out chance angry puffs of gas which the evil principles sent to scorch the untended fillet.

Ten minutes past four, and Mrs. Thompson not back! No wonder; for look, a quick fretful shower was speckling against the windows. The good old lady had been caught, no doubt, by the rain, and kept under shelter.

Now, it would never do, Susan thought, for aunt to come back and find her an idle good-for-nothing thing, sitting staring at the fire; so she darted up, and, uncording her box, got out some patchwork that she was finishing for home, and, taking it to the window, from whence she could see the fire, and where the plate-warmer did not interrupt her view, she sat down on a chair and bent herself diligently at her work.

There was no sound but the click and jolt of the spit, the fall of an occasional coal against the edge of the dripping-pan, and now and then a little voice-performance from the lark in the outer area.

On the whitewashed wall, close to the window, and a little to the left hand of where Susan sat merrily at work, there hung a little square looking-glass. All at once, as Susan's eyes glanced upwards from her work (for her chair was turned round almost facing the window), she saw upon its surface the reflexion of the clock-face, the hands of which pointed to half-past four.

"Why, good gracious, what is aunt doing!" thought Susan. "We dine at five, and at half-past four master comes down to wash his hands before he goes his walk. O dear, O dear, the veal will be spoiled! Where is aunt?"

Then, with one look at the veal, which was bearing its fiery martyrdom with good-natured equanimity, she resumed her work again with somewhat restless and troubled haste. When, five minutes later, her eyes rose once more to the looking-glass (not from vanity, but by mere accident), she almost screamed, for she saw in it the reflexion of a tall neatly-dressed old gentleman in a blue coat and brass buttons, who stood at the foot of the stairs and just within the shadow of the doorway, his eyes bent upon her.

Now, Mr. Dobbs did not turn off to the left and go into the scullery to wash his hands at the tap, as he might have been expected to do, but he came slowly up to the window without speaking.

Susan's heart beat nineteen to the dozen. Was he going to scold her aunt for being out at such a critical time? No; he did not speak, but walked to the fire, looked at the veal, hemmed twice, coughed, and then returned to Susan's chair. The second time, he stooped, and lifted her hand with a grave politeness.

"Susan," he said, "will you accept me as a husband? There, don't flurry yourself! I will come down again in ten minutes and hear your answer. Good-by till then." And up-stairs he went.

While Susan still sat there, red as a damask rose, trembling, confused, astonished, frightened, the front door creaked, and down came Mrs. Thompson, all in a flurry.

"O, Susan! I've been kept by a poor creature as I saw fall in a fit just by St. Margaret-Moses. I and Mrs. Jones got him to the door of the milkman's at the corner, and undid his shirt-collar and waistcoat to give him air, and what should we find under his waistcoat but a large placard, on which was written, 'Don't bleed me; give me brandy-and-water;' which we did, and just as he had taken it up came a policeman, and said he was a rogue, and had soap in his mouth to make it look like foam; and just then the rascal gets up, leaps over a truck, and runs off, and Mrs. Jones——"

But Susan, unable to bear the delay any longer, burst out with her story: to which her aunt listened with staring eyes, uplifted hands, and open mouth.

"It was Mr. Tompkins, depend upon it, my dear."

"No, aunt, it was master—it was indeed. I knew him, because he spoke to me in the shop when I came in. O, dear aunt, he'll be down directly! What shall I do?"

"Do, dear? Do whatever your own heart tells you to do. Think of your father and mother, and what you gain and what you sacrifice. O dear me, I hope master is not going mad. I'll leave you, dear, and shut myself in the area out of hearing, and you must call me when he's gone. Lawks, I do think I hear him coming. Mind you say yes or no, or he'll be angry."

Solomon himself could not have given wiser counsel. The good old body scuffled off to a retired corner of the coal-hole, and Susan, blushing and tremulous, settled again, or pretended to settle, to her work.

In that swift moment what thousands of kind, and generous, and self-denying thoughts shot like express trains through Susan's little head! Poor father, mother getting old, William Brown her old sweetheart that wild sailor—who had ceased to write to her, and who was now lying at Quebec, too late repentant, crippled and penniless, sick, and perhaps dying. With Mr. Dobbs's fortune, what fairy dreams of good she might realise.

A voice she knew, from behind her chair, said:

"Susan, will you have me for a husband?"

She hardly knew how to answer, but, dropping her patchwork, she answered naïvely, in a low but firm voice:

"Yes, sir, if you please."

Then there came a calm kiss upon her forehead, and a hand clasped hers.

"You shall never repent that word, Susan," said Mr. Dobbs. "I will be good and true. You must do no more work in this place; remember, you are to be my wife. Good-by, dearest."

When Susan dared to look round, he was gone. But it was no dream, for there was the May-bough she had brought from Colchester blooming in the great blue jug over the mantelpiece.

Susan ran and dragged Aunt Thompson out of the coal-cellar, and told her all: not boastingly, nor pertly, nor vainly, but with quiet modest satisfaction; for, after all, she well knew her heart would never break forth into such flower as it had once done, and the good

fortune was still too recent and too overwhelming.

How can so feeble a narrator as I, pretend to describe the way in which Aunt Thompson received the news; how she first turned tricolor with surprise, then purple with delight, then hysterical with joy; how she sat down and rocked in her chair, and then laughed and then cried! As I am not writing fiction, why should I dilate on these obvious things?

The affair was kept secret for a week by Mr. Dobbs's wish and Aunt Thompson's advice: the only bad result of which secresy was, that it destroyed the happiness of two aspiring men—Mr. Tompkins, and the gay rattling honest guard of the Colchester coach: both of whom proposed to Susan within the week, and both of whom were rejected.

IV. THE MARRIAGE.

Never had the important beadle of the important parish of St. Margaret-Moses seen such a marriage. There were ninety-four charity boys and girls, with white satin favours on their left arms. There was bell-ringing, almost Bedlamic in its persistent and rejoicing jangle. There was a parish dinner, at which Mr. Tompkins mournfully presided, looking down between an avenue of twelve white ties. The chimney of No. 16 for a whole week smoked, and then for two whole days the fire-engines could not be kept from the house; and as for the ramonneur-men, their brushes waved in St. Margaret-lane as Birnam Wood when it came marching down on the doomed castle of Macbeth. No Pickford van came to Margaret-lane but the drivers were feasted on good beef and ale, so lavishly did the bridegroom's hospitality inundate and flood all that came near that locality; at one time, indeed, it was all Mr. Tompkins could do to prevent the twelve frantic young men in white ties from rushing into Cheapside, and offering jugs of beer to passing hackney-coachmen.

Mr. Dobbs had chosen a wife late in life; he had chosen a young wife from a dangerous and foolish impulse, and dared the radical publican at the Three Malt Shovels in Seething-lane; but the radical publican was wrong, as parish and other politicians have indeed been known to be more than once. Mr. Dobbs had chosen late and chosen hastily, but he had chosen with the swift unerring instinct of a shrewd old brain and an old but still unchilled heart. He had dived into the great shoal-begirt sea of matrimony, and found a pearl of pearls.

He affected no hurricane of passion, no sighs—no ceaseless vows and brittle protestations—he loved calmly, respectfully, almost paternally; but he loved (though he was a grocer) as faithfully as your finest impossible lover in fiction. He did not flatter Susan, or weary her with servile adoration, but he showed her by a thousand ceaseless quiet attentions how much he loved her. When she told him of Mr. Tompkins's proposal, and thought it would be better he left (though she thought him a kind-hearted, industrious fellow), Mr. Dobbs would not hear of such a thing.

"No, Susan," he said; "there's no jealousy, not a grain, in me. I love you too well. And even if you never learned to love me, I know very well that you would love no other man, my darling?"

A night or two after the wedding, when Susan and Aunt Thompson were chatting alone on a seat in pleasant Drapers' Gardens, Aunt Thompson, foolishly enough, began to cry as if her heart was going to break.

"Why, dear aunty, aunty, what is the matter?" said Susan, fondling and kissing her good old cheek.

"I'm afraid, dear—I've been thinking—I'm afraid that now you are married, and are rich and rolling in money, the beauty and wonder of all St. Margaret-Moses—which you was the very last Sunday as ever was—you'll be getting ashamed of poor old aunt, and be sending me off, for fear your new friends should think me ignorant, and not fit for parlour visitors, and out of place, and——oh!" (Here Niobe became a mere drinking fountain to the Mississippi of the good old creature's grief.)

How tenderly and softly Susan comforted Aunt Thompson, and kissed her, and pulled off her gloves, and patted her hands, and hugged her waist, and assured her that if the Bank of England got so full with dear Mr. Dobbs's money that they actually refused to take in any more of it for fear of a financial apoplexy, still even in that contingency she (Susan) would love and cherish her old aunt, who had been the cause of all her good fortune, and had enabled her to help poor William, and perhaps save his life!

V. LAST SCENE OF ALL.

In the second year of Susan's marriage she gave birth to a son, much to the delight of the whole parish of St. Margaret-Moses, and to the special joy of Aunt Thompson and her crony Mrs. Jones, now the pew-opener. Nine years after the marriage, old Aunt Thompson died, and eleven years after the marriage, Mr. Dobbs died.

They were both buried in the black quiet little churchyard of St. Margaret-Moses. No pleasant trees cast wavering shadows upon their tombstones, but mignonette bloomed sweet close at hand, and sunshine came and glanced across the sooty boughs of the solitary plane-tree, and little melancholy precocious sparrows chirped their embryo music, and little rosy faces looked at the graves from between the rusty rails, and little voices prattled of "dood Mr. Dobbs," and of "dood Mrs. Thompson." And those words were better than sham poems and the lying flowers that often fall on grander coffins.

One afternoon, two years later, Mr. Tompkins, now rather corpulent and slightly bald, blurted out a proposal of marriage to the rich and still

pretty widow of the millionnaire of Margaret-lane.

"No, Mr. Tompkins," said Susan, "I value you for your probity and your industry, and still more for your fidelity and attachment to my dear husband. Nor am I indifferent to this last stronger proof of your regard to myself personally; but I shall never marry again. I shall devote the rest of my life to directing the education of my dear boy. Hereafter I shall perhaps find an opportunity of showing how much I value your services. For the present, good-by. Forget what you have just said to me, and let it be as if it had never been said."

Mr. Tompkins rose, and was struggling with the back of his chair in oratorical agony, when the door burst open, and in rushed Master Harry Dobbs, who had been helping the servant to pack his trunk for Eton.

"Ma," he said, "how many collars am I to take? There are only three dozen here."

"My dear Harry, Mr. Tompkins is talking business. I'll be with you directly."

One bright afternoon, in the June of the same year, that eminent law lord, Lord Cantelupe, whose eldest son was married the other day to the second daughter of the Marquis de Champignon, reined up the two bays that drew his barouche, at the door of Mrs. Dobbs, 16, St. Margaret-lane.

The bell was rung. Mrs. Dobbs was at home. Now, Lord Cantelupe had been an old friend of Mr. Dobbs, and was surprised to find the hall—or rather dim passage, for it was no more—lumbered with boxes, and rolls of carpet, and cases of pictures. These he stopped to survey in an alarmed manner through a gold-framed double eye-glass.

"Egad!" he said to himself, "I was only just in time to snap the widow. My usual luck. Now for it."

In twenty minutes more, the accomplished and gifted orator had, with all an old wary man of the world's sagacity and blandness, laid down an impromptu carpet of verbal rose-leaves, upon which he had figuratively thrown himself, and prostrated himself, his oratory, his ermine, and his house in Park-row, at the feet of the pretty widow.

An interval of silence ensued, as when one goes down in a diving-bell. Then, came a violent pricking in the legal ears of the accomplished orator. These remarkable and astounding words struck his noble tympanum:

"My lord, you were such a kind friend to my dear husband, and have been so kind to me since his death, that it gives me pain to refuse the honour so generously proffered me, but I shall never marry again. I shall devote the rest of my life to the education of my boy Harry. I should not wish the world to impute mercenary motives to any man who took me for his wife. I leave this house to-morrow. I have given half the business to my excellent foreman, and have taken a house at Slough, to be near my boy's school."

"Egad," said Lord Cantelupe, as he got into his carriage, and squeezed together (in a half petulant, half melancholy way) the two portions of his eye-glass: "no verdict in the world ever knocked me over half as much. Yet, by George, I don't know now that I won't have another try. What *could* she mean about mercenary?"

The noble and learned lord has not yet won Mrs. Dobbs, Harry is a capital fellow, and the business at No. 16, Margaret-lane, flourishes bravely under the auspices of Tompkins.

My story has, I know, been absurdly simple. No intrusive husband toppled down a well, no bigamy nor trigamy, no poisoned sandwich. It has only been a plain unadorned narrative of self-denial, and of a heart that bloomed

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HALF A MILLION OF MONEY.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "BARBARA'S HISTORY."

CHAPTER XXXIII. THE RIFLE MATCH.

AT half-past two, an open carriage drove up to the ground, and four ladies alighted. They were received by Lord Castletowers, handed to their seats, and presented with written programmes of the games. Miss Colonna was installed in the central arm-chair, which, being placed a little in advance of the other seats and dignified with a footstool, was styled, magniloquently, the Throne. Scarcely had they taken their places, when two more carriages appeared upon the scene, the first of which contained Lady Arabella Walkingshaw and Miss Hatherton, and the second, Mrs. Cadogan, the wife of the Sedgebrook vicar, and her two daughters. The latter, hearing down in the village what was doing in the park, had come over to see the sports; but Lady Arabella's visit was made in exclusive pursuance of her own little game, and bore no kind of reference to any game that might be set on foot by other people. She was, therefore, rather put out than otherwise when, instead of finding Lady Castletowers at home, she was informed that "my lady was gone across the park to see the gentlemen race, and had left word, if any friends called at the house, that there would be seats for them, if they liked to follow." Miss Hatherton, however, was delighted.

"It's perfectly charming," said she, as they turned down the drive leading to that part of the park indicated by the servant. "You cannot think how pleased I am, Lady Arabella!"

"Well, my dear, then I am pleased too," replied Lady Arabella, benevolently.

"There's nothing I enjoy so much as contests of this kind," Miss Hatherton went on to say. "Boat-races, horse-races, reviews, anything, so long as skill, strength, or speed is in question. Why, I haven't missed a Derby-day for the last five years; and as for the Roman Carnival, the only thing I care for in it is the horse-race. I'm always sorry the Jews don't run instead. It would be so much more amusing."

"You droll creature!" said Lady Arabella, with a faint smile. "I wonder if Mr. Trefalden will take part in these games?"

"Of course he will—and win all before him. He's as fleet as a chamois, depend on it."

"I hope they won't fire," said Lady Arabella, with a little lady-like shudder.

"And I hope, above all things, that they will. But then, you know, dear Lady Arabella, I have no nerves. Why, this is delightful—there's quite a crowd!"

And so there was. News is contagious, and propagates itself as mysteriously as the potato disease. The whole neighbourhood had already heard, somehow or another, of what was doing at the park; and every farmer, gamekeeper, and idle fellow about the place, was on the ground long before the hour appointed. As for the women and children, nothing short of Polygamy could account for their numbers.

"Lady Arabella Walkingshaw and Miss Hatherton!" said Lord Castletowers, hastening to the carriage door as they drove up. "This is indeed a happy accident. You have been to the house, I suppose, to call upon my mother."

"We have; but with no idea that we were coming to a—a fête of this kind," replied Lady Arabella, somewhat at a loss for the most appropriate word, and exchanging bows and gracious smiles with the ladies on the platform.

"Why did you not tell us about it last evening, you sly man?" asked Miss Hatherton.

"Because I then knew no more about it than yourself," replied the Earl. "It is an improvisation."

"And what are you going to do?"

"A little of everything—rifle-shooting, leaping, running; but you shall have a programme presently, and if you will alight, I can give you seats beside my mother."

With this he gave his arm to Lady Arabella, and conducted both ladies to the place of honour.

"But where are the competitors?" said Miss Hatherton, when the due greetings had been exchanged, and they had taken their seats; "and above all, where's my friend, the noble savage?"

"Trefalden? Oh, he's in our tent, out yonder. This affair was his idea entirely."

"And an admirable idea too. But he'll beat you, you know."

"He would, if he came forward," replied the Earl; "but he declines to compete."

"Declines to compete!" echoed the heiress.

"Yes—for everything except the last race—and that we all go in for."

"I never heard of such a thing!" exclaimed Miss Hatherton, indignantly. "Why, it's as if

the favourite was withdrawn at the last moment from the Derby—and I, too, who had intended to back him to any extent! I declare I was never more disappointed in my life. What's his motive?"

"He said he was out of practice," replied Castletowers, hesitatingly.

"Nonsense. That wasn't his real motive. He knew nobody else would have a chance, and he was too generous to carry off all the honours."

"Do you really think so?" said Miss Colonna, suddenly. She had listened to the conversation till now, without taking part in it.

"I do, indeed. What does Lord Castletowers say?"

"I say that Miss Hatherton is right; and I *know* her to be right. Trefalden could write his name in bullets on that target, if he chose—but he won't."

Miss Hatherton turned to Miss Colonna in a glow of enthusiasm.

"That's true nobleness!" she exclaimed.

"Indeed it is," said Castletowers. "He's the finest fellow I have ever known, savage or civilised."

But Miss Colonna said nothing.

"I wish you'd bring him this way, Lord Castletowers," said the heiress. "I like talking to him—he amuses me immensely."

"You shall have him by-and-by," laughed the Earl; "but he is our judge in the rifle-matches, and can't be spared at present. Excuse me—another carriage full of ladies. I am master of the ceremonies."

And with this he ran off to receive the Cadogans.

The appointed hour being overpast, the ladies expectant, and the audience considerable, it was decided that they should begin.

Lord Castletowers was seen to cross the course, and enter the cricketing tent at the further end, whence he presently emerged with his cartridge-box belted on, and his rifle in his hand. He was followed by five others, similarly equipped. Saxon Trefalden, in his quality as judge, took up a safe position to the right of the target. Miss Hatherton surveyed them through her opera-glass as they came over the ground and placed themselves about a dozen yards off with their backs to the stand.

"Dear me! they are very near us," said Lady Arabella, with that pretty timidity that is less charming at eight-and-forty than at eighteen. "I hope it is not dangerous."

"Don't be alarmed, my dear friend," said Miss Hatherton. "Gentlemen don't generally fire behind their own backs. So, Major Vaughan begins—and a very good shot, too—very near the bull's eye. Who is that remarkably handsome fair man to the right?"

The question was addressed to Miss Colonna; but it received no reply. Olimpia heard the words, as she heard the report of the first rifle, without attaching any import to the sound, just as her eyes were fixed upon the target, but saw nothing. She was absorbed in thought—very painful thought, as it would seem, by the strange hard way in which her lips were drawn together, and her fingers were mechanically twisting and tearing the programme which they held.

Miss Hatherton turned to repeat the inquiry; but, seeing the expression on Olimpia's face, remained silent. It was an expression that startled her, and puzzled her as much as it startled her. An expression such as one sees but seldom in the course of an ordinary life; neither wholly resolute, nor hopeless, nor defiant; but a blending, perhaps, of all three, with something else that might have been compunction—or despair.

Curiosity so far prevailed, that for some three or four seconds Miss Hatherton continued to stare at Olimpia instead of watching the competitors, and thus, to her infinite mortification, lost the thread of the firing. Of course, none of the ladies on the platform could help her. They saw the riflemen, and they saw the marks on the target; but not one among them had the dimmest idea of the order in which those marks had been dealt, or of the hands that had bestowed them. The appointed number of rounds, however, having been fired out, the question was set at rest by the announcement that Sir Charles Burgoyne had carried off the first prize. Sir Charles Burgoyne sauntered up accordingly to the front of the platform, and received the cup from Miss Colonna's hand with the best-bred indifference in the world.

"You don't share my passion for these contests, Miss Colonna," said the heiress, in the pause that ensued between the first and second match. The strange look had vanished from Olimpia's face long since; but Miss Hatherton could not forget it—would have given something to fathom it.

"Indeed you mistake. I think them very interesting," replied Olimpia.

"But of course they cannot have so much interest for you as for me. Your sympathies are bound up in a great cause, and you must have fewer small emotions on hand."

"Perhaps," said Olimpia, with a forced smile.

"No bad news from Italy, I hope?"

"The news at present," replied Olimpia, "is neither bad nor good. It is a season of anxious suspense for all whose hearts are in the cause."

"You look anxious," said Miss Hatherton, kindly, but inquisitively. "I thought just now I never saw a face look so anxious as yours. You didn't seem to remark the firing at all."

A crimson tide rushed to Olimpia's face, flooded it, and ebbed away, leaving her paler than before.

"I am quite strong enough," she replied, coldly, "to sustain such cares as fall to my lot."

The competitors for the second rifle-match were now on the ground, and the conversation dropped. There were but four this time—Lord Castletowers, Sir Charles Burgoyne, Major Vaughan, and Lieutenant Torrington. Having five shots each, they fired alternately, one shot at a time, in their order as they stood—Vaughan

first, Torrington second, Castletowers third, and Burgoyne fourth. It became evident, after the first two rounds, that Vaughan, although a good marksman, was inferior to both Castletowers and Burgoyne, and that Torrington was nowhere. Miss Hatherton and Miss Colonna were the only two ladies who could follow the shots, or understand the scoring; and this they did with a degree of interest quite incomprehensible to the rest. As the end drew near, and it became evident that the victory lay between Burgoyne and the Earl, Miss Hatherton's excitement became intense.

"Ten to one on Lord Castletowers," she exclaimed. "See how cool he is! See how steadily he brings up his gun—ten to one, gloves or guineas. Will nobody take me? In the white, I vow, and all but in the very centre! Beat that, Sir Charles, if you can!"

"He will *not* beat it," said Olimpia, in a low, earnest voice.

Miss Hatherton glanced at her again; but scarcely for a second. She was too deeply interested in the next shot to care much about anything else just then. But she saw Olimpia's parted lips, and the outlooking light in her eyes, and thought of both afterwards.

Up to this point, Lord Castletowers had scored four three times, and three twice, making a total of eighteen. Sir Charles had scored four twice, and three twice, making a total of fourteen. The next shot would be his fifth, and last. If he hit the bull's eye, it would be a drawn game between Castletowers and himself, and they would have to try again for the victory; but if he scored anything less than four, the Earl must win.

There was a moment of suspense. Sir Charles brought up his gun very slowly, took aim twice before he fired, and delivered an excellent shot just *on* the line dividing the bull's eye from the centre ring. He had lost by the sixteenth of an inch.

The spectators round the ropes set up a faint respectful shout in their squire's honour; the non-competitors rushed up to the target; and Saxon, too well pleased to care for the moment whether Burgoyne heard him or not, shook his friend by both hands, exclaiming:

"I am so glad, Castletowers—so heartily glad! I did wish you to win those pistols!"

Olimpia's smile was cold and indifferent enough when the Earl presented himself to receive his prize; but Miss Hatherton's sharp eyes saw that her hand trembled.

CHAPTER XXXIV. A GUERDON.

The long jump was jumped, and the hundred yards race was run—Mr. Guy Greville winning the first by four inches, and Major Vaughan the second by four yards. Only the great race remained to be contested. In the mean while, half an hour was allowed for rest and refreshments. The gentlemen thronged to the platform in a mongrel costume compounded of flannel trousers, cricketing-shoes, parti-coloured Jerseys, and overcoats of various descriptions; so that they looked like cricketing men below and boating men above. Servants glided solemnly about with Madeira and biscuits. The ladies congratulated the victors, and the victors congratulated each other. The spectators outside the ropes strolled about respectfully, and did a little subdued betting among themselves; and the conversation on the platform was broken up into coteries. One of these consisted of Lady Arabella Walkingshaw, Lady Castletowers, and her son.

"Vaughan ran well, didn't he?" said the Earl. "I thought at one moment that Greville would have distanced him; but Vaughan had the most wind, and steady did it."

"You would do well, Gervase, to reserve your sporting phraseology for your male friends," said Lady Castletowers, coldly. "You forget that ladies do not appreciate its full point and vigour."

"I beg your pardon, my dear mother; but it comes so naturally when sport is the topic of conversation," replied her son. "I hope you are amused, Lady Arabella?"

"Oh yes, thank you—when you don't fire."

"There is, at all events, nothing undignified in firing," observed the Countess.

"I hope you do not think our athletic games undignified, mother?" said the Earl.

"For gentlemen, certainly. For boys, or peasants, not at all."

"But a gentleman has as many and as good muscles as a peasant. A gentleman values strength and speed as much, and sometimes more, than he values Greek and Latin; but, like Greek and Latin, strength and speed must be kept up by frequent exercise."

"I have no wish to argue the question," said Lady Castletowers. "It is enough that I set a higher value on skill than force, and that it gives me no gratification to see half a dozen gentlemen racing round a piece of sward for the entertainment of a mob of gamekeepers and ploughmen."

"Nay—for our own entertainment and yours, dearest mother," replied the young man, gently. "We have never yet shut our park gates on these good people; but their presence goes for nothing in what we do to-day."

He spoke very deferentially, but with a faint flush of annoyance on his face, and passed on to where Miss Hatherton was chatting with Saxon Trefalden.

"It will be a long time," she said, "before I can forgive you for my disappointment of this morning. And I know I am right. You could have beaten everybody at everything, if you had pleased. It was an absurd piece of Quixotism, and I am very angry with you for it. There—don't attempt to deny it. Lord Castletowers has confessed, and it is of no use for you to plead not guilty."

"Lord Castletowers never saw me leap a foot or run a yard in his life," said Saxon, emphatically. "He knows nothing of what I can, or cannot do."

"I am here to answer for myself," said the

Earl, laying his hand on his friend's shoulder. "And I *do* know that you can put a bullet through a shifting weathercock at five hundred yards."

"A mere trick!"

"Not so. Skill is no more to be confounded with trickery than pocket-picking with legerdemain. I am of Miss Hatherton's opinion, and am certain you could have beaten us all round if you had chosen to take the trouble."

"You will find out your mistake presently, when you have all left me in the rear," said Saxon, a little impatiently; "I would recommend no one to bet upon me."

"*I* mean to bet upon you, Mr. Trefalden," said Miss Hatherton.

"Pray don't; you will be sure to lose your money."

"I don't believe it; or if I do, I shall call upon you to pay my debts, for I shall be certain you have lagged behind on purpose."

At this moment one or two of the others came up, and the conversation turned upon the preceding contests.

"Mr. Trefalden," said Miss Colonna, "will you be kind enough to tell me how many times you have to make the circuit of the ground, in this one-mile race?"

Miss Colonna's chair stood next to Miss Hatherton's, but was placed about half a foot in advance, by right of her prerogative. As she turned to address him, Saxon dropped out of the heiress's coterie, and, moving round by the back of her chair, replied:

"Exactly six times, mademoiselle."

"Will you come round to this side, Mr. Trefalden?" said Olimpia, in a low tone; "I have something to say to you."

Not without some vague sense of surprise, the young man passed on behind the second chair, and presented himself at Miss Colonna's left hand.

"You are really going to contest this one-mile race, are you not?" she asked.

"I have entered my name with the rest," replied Saxon.

"Then you mean, of course, to win if you can?"

Saxon looked embarrassed.

"I have entered my name," he said, "but I am not sure that I shall run, for all that. Somebody must act as judge; and I prefer not to race if I can help it."

"But I particularly prefer that you should race, Mr. Trefalden," said Olimpia, dropping her voice to a still lower key; "I want you to win me that purse of twenty guineas for my dear Italy."

"It will be yours, and Italy's, mademoiselle, whoever wins it."

"I know that, Mr. Trefalden."

"Then what difference can it make whether I, or another, carry off the prize?" said Saxon, wonderingly.

"It *does* make a difference," replied Olimpia, lifting her eyes suddenly to his.

Saxon felt fluttered, without knowing why.

"What difference?" faltered he.

"Must I tell you?"

"If—if you please."

"Will you promise to win for me, if I do tell you?"

"I don't know—I will try."

"I ask no more than that. If you really try, I am confident of victory. Well then, I want you to win because—I suppose, because I am a woman; and all women are capricious."

Saxon looked puzzled.

"I don't think you are capricious," he said.

"Do you not? Then I am afraid that is because you are a man; and all men are vain. There is a pair of maxims for you."

"Maxims for which I can discover no application," replied Saxon, laughingly. "Why should I be accused of vanity because I refuse to believe that Mademoiselle Colonna is guilty of caprice?"

"I am afraid you are very dull to-day, Mr. Trefalden,—or very subtle."

"I know I am not subtle," said Saxon; "but I must be dreadfully dull."

"If your feet do not outstrip your apprehension, you will scarcely win the cup. What bell is that?"

"It's the signal for assembling," replied Saxon; "I must go now; and you have not told me, after all."

"But you have promised me that you will try."

"No, no—my promise was conditional on your explanation."

"But have I not told you that women are capricious?"

"What of that?"

"We sometimes value a cowslip from one hand more than a rose from another; and—and perhaps I am so capricious as to prefer the Italian prize from yours. Hark! there is the second bell! Now, go; and bring me back the purse."

The tone in which this was said—the gesture, half persuasive, half imperious—the dazzling smile by which it was accompanied, were more than enough to turn an older head than Saxon Trefalden's. He stammered something, he scarcely knew what; and his heart leaped, he scarcely knew why.

"If you do not go at once," said Miss Colonna, "you will be too late. Shall I give you my glove for a favour? Be a true knight, and deserve it."

Breathless, intoxicated, the young man pressed the glove furtively to his lips, thrust it into his bosom, leaped down upon the course, and flew to take his place among the runners. He felt as if his feet were clad in the winged sandals of Hermes; as if his head touched the clouds, and the very air were sunshine. It was delightful, this sense of exaltation and rapture—and quite new.

Not so, however, felt Olimpia Colonna. Saxon had no sooner leaped from the platform, than the colour died out suddenly from her face, and the smile from her lips. She leaned back in her chair with a look of intense pain and

weariness, and sighed heavily. There were three persons observing her; but her thoughts were very bitter at that moment, and she was quite unconscious of their scrutiny. Those persons were Lady Castletowers; Signor Colonna, who had but just arrived, and was leaning on the back of her chair; and Miss Hatherton—and neither the look of pain, nor the sigh, was lost on either of them.

HEAT AND WORK.*

In his treatise, Heat considered as a mode of Motion, Professor Tyndall shows that heat is expended whenever work is done. After demonstrating by experiment that, where mechanical force is expended, heat is produced, he brings before us the converse experiment, and shows us the *consumption* of heat in mechanical work.

He exhibits to his audience a strong vessel filled with compressed air. It has been so compressed for some hours, in order that the temperature of the air within the vessel may be the same as that of the air in the room without. At that moment, then, the inner air was pressing against the sides of the vessel; and, if he opened the tap, a portion of the air would rush violently out of the vessel. The word "rush," however, but vaguely expresses the true state of things. The air which issues, is driven out by the air behind it; this latter accomplishes the work of urging forward the stream of air. And what will be the condition of the *working air* during this process? It will be chilled. It performs mechanical work; and the only agent it can call upon to perform it, is the heat which it possesses, and to which the elastic force with which it presses against the sides of the vessel, is entirely due. A portion of this heat will be consumed, and the air will be chilled. It *is* so, on carrying out the experiment. The tap is turned, and the current of air from the vessel is allowed to strike against the face of the thermo-electric pile—the most delicate and demonstrative of thermometers. The magnetic needle instantly responds, declaring that the pile has been *chilled* by the current of air.

The effect is different when air is urged from the nozzle of a common bellows against the pile. In the last experiment, the mechanical work of urging the air forward was performed by the air itself, and a portion of its heat was consumed in the effort. In the case of the bellows, it is the experimenter's muscles which perform the work. *He* raises the upper board of the bellows, and the air rushes in; he presses the boards with a certain force, and the air rushes out. The expelled air, striking the face of the pile, has its motion stopped; and an amount of heat equivalent to the destruction of this motion is instantly generated. When a current of air is directed with the bellows against the pile, the motion of the needle shows that the face of the pile has, in this instance, been *warmed* by the air.

Again: to prove the chilling effect of work done, even by so slightly-built a labourer as gas, the Professor takes a bottle of soda-water, which is shown to be a trifle warmer than the pile. He cuts the string which holds the cork, and it is driven out by the elastic force of the carbonic acid gas. The gas performs work; in so doing, it consumes heat; and the deflection of the needle produced by the bottle shows that it has become colder. A simple detail of daily life, an operation with which every child is familiar, allows the lecturer to illustrate principles from which all material phenomena flow. That it is not the expansion, but the work, which produces the chill, is proved by allowing compressed air, from one vessel, to pass into another from which the air has been exhausted. No work having to be done, there is no change of temperature. Mere rarefaction, therefore, is not of itself sufficient to produce a lowering of the mean temperature of a mass of air. It was, and still is, a current notion that the mere expansion of a gas produces refrigeration, no matter *how* that expansion may be effected. The coldness of the higher atmospheric regions was accounted for by reference to the expansion of the air. But the refrigeration which accompanies expansion is really due to the consumption of heat in the performance of work. Where no work is performed, there is no absolute refrigeration. The simple experiment of allowing a leaden ball to fall from the ceiling to the floor, shows that heat is generated by the sudden stoppage of the motion. This affords an opportunity of telling how the "mechanical equivalent" of heat has been calculated.

It is found that the quantity of heat which would raise one pound of water one degree Fahrenheit in temperature, is exactly equal to what would be generated if a pound weight, after having fallen through a height of seven hundred and seventy-two feet, had its moving force destroyed by collision with the earth. Conversely, the amount of heat necessary to raise a pound of water one degree in temperature, would, if all applied mechanically, be competent to raise a pound weight seven hundred and seventy-two feet high; or, it would raise seven hundred and seventy-two pounds, one foot high. The term "foot-pound" has therefore been introduced to express in a convenient way the lifting of one pound to the height of a foot. Thus, the quantity of heat necessary to raise the temperature of a pound of water one degree Fahrenheit being taken as a standard, seven hundred and seventy-two foot-pounds constitute what is called *the mechanical equivalent* of heat.

For every stroke of work done by the steam-engine, for every pound that it lifts, and for every wheel that it sets in motion, an equivalent quantity of heat disappears. A ton of coal furnishes by its combustion a certain definite amount of heat. Let this quantity of coal be applied to work a steam-engine; and let all the heat communicated to the machine and the condenser, and all the heat lost by radiation and by contact with the air, be collected; it will fall short of the quantity produced by the simple

* See Is Heat Motion? page 534 in the last volume.

combustion of the ton of coal, by an amount exactly equivalent to the work performed. Suppose that work to consist in lifting a weight of seven thousand seven hundred and twenty pounds a foot high; the heat produced by the coal would fall short of its maximum by a quantity just sufficient to warm a pound of water ten degrees Fahrenheit. In an elaborate series of experiments, executed with extraordinary assiduity and on a grand scale by M. Hirn, a civil engineer at Colmar, this theoretic deduction has been reduced to fact.

In earthly, and we may add in planetary, affairs, the sun is the great worker who keeps the whole business of life and action going. It has been asserted that there is no life in certain planets. A few years ago, Dr. Whewell wrote a book to prove that the more distant planets of our system are uninhabitable. Applying the law of inverse squares to their distances from the sun, the diminution of temperature was found to be so great as to preclude the possibility of human life in the more remote members of the solar system. But—not to mention the hazardous task of attempting to prove a negative—the influence of an atmospheric envelope was overlooked in those calculations. The omission vitiates the whole argument. It is perfectly possible to find an atmosphere which would act the part of *a barb* to the solar rays, permitting their entrance towards the planet, but preventing their withdrawal. For example, Professor Tyndall tells us, a layer of air only two inches in thickness, and saturated with the vapour of sulphuric ether, would offer very little resistance to the passage of the solar rays, but would cut off fully thirty-five per cent of the planetary radiation. It would require no inordinate thickening of the layer of vapour to double this absorption; and it is evident that, with a protecting envelope which permits heat to enter but prevents its escape, a comfortable temperature might be obtained on the surface of our most distant planet.

It is the presence of a protective atmosphere that renders the earth itself habitable; and in regions where it is so modified by the absence of aqueous vapour as to lose its protective power, man cannot live. One cause of the coldness of high mountain-tops, is their being lifted beyond the protection of the layer of moist air which lies close to the earth. The withdrawal of sunshine from any region over which *the atmosphere is dry*, must be followed by quick refrigeration. The moon would be rendered entirely uninhabitable by beings like ourselves, through the operation of this single cause. With a radiation uninterrupted by aqueous vapour, the difference between her monthly maxima and minima of temperature must be enormous. The winters of Thibet are almost unendurable, from the same cause. Humboldt dwelt upon the "frigorific power" of the central portions of the Asiatic continent, and controverted the idea that it was to be explained by reference to their elevation; there being vast expanses of country, not much above the sea level, with an exceedingly low temperature. He did not seem to be aware of this one most important cause which contributes to the observed result. The absence of the sun at night causes powerful refrigeration when the air is dry. The removal, for a single summer night, of the aqueous vapour from the atmosphere which covers England, would be attended by the destruction of every plant which a freezing temperature could kill. In Sahara, where "the soil is fire and the wind is flame," the refrigeration at night is often painful to bear. Ice has been formed in this region at night. In Australia also, *the diurnal range* of temperature is very great, amounting, commonly, to between forty and fifty degrees. In short, it may be safely predicted that, wherever the air is *dry*, the daily thermometric range will be great. This, however, is quite different from saying that where the air is *clear*, the thermometric range will be great. Great clearness as to light is perfectly compatible with great opacity as to heat. The atmosphere may be charged with aqueous vapour, while a deep blue sky is overhead; and on such occasions the terrestrial radiation would, notwithstanding the "clearness," be intercepted. It is consequently impossible for any one on earth to be sure that the distant planets are uninhabitable, and that the sun cannot be to them, as to us, a vivifyer as well as a worker.

Years ago, Sir John Herschel wrote: "The sun's rays are the ultimate source of almost every motion which takes place on the surface of the earth. By its heat are produced all winds, and those disturbances in the electrical equilibrium of the atmosphere which give rise to the phenomena of lightning, and probably also to terrestrial magnetism and the Aurora. By their vivifying action vegetables are enabled to draw support from inorganic matter, and become in their turn the support of animals and man, and the source of those deposits of dynamical efficiency which are laid up for human use in our coal strata. By them the waters of the sea are made to circulate in vapour through the air, and irrigate the land, producing springs and rivers. By them are produced all disturbances of the chemical equilibrium of the elements of nature; which, by a series of compositions and decompositions, originate new products and a transfer of materials."

Professor Tyndall applies the new philosophy to illustrate and expand Herschel's proposition. He reminds us that late discoveries have taught that winds and rivers have their definite thermal values; and that, in order to produce their motion, an equivalent amount of solar heat has been consumed. While they exist *as winds and rivers*, the heat expended in producing them has ceased to exist as heat, being converted into mechanical motion; but when that motion is arrested, the heat which produced it is restored. A river, in descending from an elevation of seven thousand seven hundred and twenty feet, generates an amount of heat competent to augment its own temperature ten degrees Fahrenheit. This amount of heat has been ab-

stracted from the sun, in order to lift the matter of the river to the elevation from which it falls.

As long as the river continues on the heights, whether in the solid form as a glacier, or in the liquid form as a lake, the heat expended by the sun in lifting it has disappeared from the universe. It has been consumed in the act of lifting. But, at the moment when the river starts upon its downward course, and encounters the resistance of its bed, the heat expended in its elevation begins to be restored.

The mental eye can follow the emission of heat from its source, the sun, through the ether, as vibratory motion, to the ocean, where it ceases to be *vibration*, taking "the potential form" among the molecules of aqueous vapour; and also to the mountain-top, where the heat absorbed in vaporisation is given out in condensation, while that expended by the sun in *lifting* the water to that elevation is still unrestored. This we find paid back, to the last unit, by the friction along the river's bed; at the bottom of the cascades where the plunge of the torrent is suddenly arrested; in the warmth of the machinery turned by the river; in the spark from the millstone; beneath the crusher of the miner; in the Alpine saw-mill; in the milk-churn of the châlet; in the supports of the cradle rocking the mountaineer's baby to sleep by water-power. All these forms of mechanical motion are simply the parcelling out of an amount of calorific motion derived originally from the sun. At each point at which the mechanical motion is destroyed or diminished, it is the sun's heat which is restored.

There are other motions and other energies whose relations are not so obvious. Trees and vegetables grow upon the earth; when burned they give rise to heat, from which immense quantities of mechanical energy are derived. What is the source of this energy?

To answer the question, Professor Tyndall shows his audience (or his readers) some iron rust, which they can plainly see, produced by the falling together of the atoms of iron and oxygen, and also some transparent carbonic acid gas, which they cannot see, formed by the union of carbon and oxygen. The atoms, thus respectively united, resemble a weight that has fallen from a height and is lying on the ground. But exactly as the weight can be wound up again and prepared for another fall, even so those atoms can be wound up, separated from each other, and enabled to repeat the process of combination. In the building up of plants, carbonic acid is the material from which the carbon of the plant is derived, while water is the substance from which it obtains its hydrogen. The solar beam winds up the weight; it is the agent which severs the atoms, setting the oxygen free, and allowing the carbon and the hydrogen to aggregate in woody fibre. It is at the expense of the solar light that the chemical decomposition takes place. Without the sun, the reduction of the carbonic acid and water cannot be effected; and, in this act, an amount of solar energy is consumed, exactly equivalent to the molecular work done.

If the sun's rays fall upon a surface of sand, the sand is heated, and finally radiates away as much heat as it receives. But let the same beams fall upon a forest; the quantity of heat then given back is less than that received, for a portion of the sunbeams is invested in the building of the trees. It is not the shade alone which renders the forest cool; heat is absorbed and appropriated, as well as intercepted by the leaves and branches as they grow.

Combustion is the reversal of this process; and all the energy invested in a plant reappears as heat when the plant is burned. Ignite a bit of cotton; it bursts into flame. The oxygen again unites with its carbon, and an amount of heat is given out, equal to that originally sacrificed by the sun to form the bit of cotton. So also as regards the "deposits of dynamical efficiency" laid up in our coal strata; they are simply the sun's rays in a "potential form." We dig from our pits, annually, eighty-four millions of tons of coal, the mechanical equivalent of which, is of almost fabulous vastness. The combustion of a single pound of coal in one minute, is equal to the work of three hundred horses for the same time. It would require one hundred and eight millions of horses, working day and night with unimpaired strength for a year, to perform an amount of work equivalent to the energy which the sun of the Carboniferous epoch invested in one year's produce of our coal-pits. Dean Swift made an egregious blunder when he ridiculed the philosopher of the Flying Island who searched for the sunbeams hidden in cucumbers.

The further we pursue this subject, the Professor here remarks, the more its interest and wonder grow upon us. He had already shown how a sun may be produced by the mere exercise of gravitating force; that, by the collision of cold dark planetary masses, the light and heat of our central orb, and also of the fixed stars, may be obtained. But here we find the physical powers, derived or derivable from the action of gravity upon dead matter, introducing themselves at the root of the question of vitality. We find in solar light and heat, the very mainspring of vegetable life. Nor can we halt at the vegetable world; for the sun, mediately or immediately, is the source of all animal life. Some animals feed directly on plants, others feed on their herbivorous fellow-creatures; but all in the long run derive life and energy from the vegetable world; all, therefore, as Helmholtz has remarked, may trace their lineage to the sun. In the animal body, the carbon and hydrogen of the vegetable are again brought into contact with the oxygen from which they had been divorced, and which is now supplied by the lungs. Reunion takes place, and animal heat is the result. Save as regards intensity, there is no difference between the combustion that thus goes on within us, and that of an ordinary fire. The products of combustion are in both cases the same carbonic acid and water.

Looking then at the physics of the question, we see that the formation of a vegetable is a pro-

cess of winding up, while the formation of an animal is a process of running down. This is the rhythm of nature as applied to animal and vegetable life. Plants are the economisers, animals are the spendthrifts, of vital energy derived from the sun.

Measured by human standards, writes Dr. Mayer, the sun is an inexhaustible source of physical energy. This is the continually wound-up spring which is the cause of all terrestrial activity. The vast amount of force sent by the earth into space in the form of wave motion (radiation) would soon bring its surface to the temperature of death. But the light of the sun is an incessant compensation. It is the sun's light, converted into heat, which sets our atmosphere in motion, which raises the water into clouds, and thus causes the rivers to flow. The heat developed by friction in the wheels of our wind and water mills, was sent from the sun to the earth in the form of vibratory motion.

Nature stores up the light which streams earthward from the sun—converting the most volatile of all powers into a rigid form, and thus preserving it for her purposes—by means of plants. The vegetable world constitutes the reservoir in which the fugitive solar rays are fixed, suitably deposited, and rendered ready for useful application. With this process the existence of the human race is inseparably connected. The physical force collected by plants becomes the property of another class of creatures—of animals. The living animal combines combustible substances belonging to the vegetable world, and causes them to reunite with the oxygen of the atmosphere. Parallel to this process, runs the work done by animals, which is the end and aim of animal existence.

The question is naturally asked, Has not the human will, power to create strength, energy, and endurance? Look at the different conduct of different individuals, under difficulties, whether moral or physical. Look at two men upon a mountain-side, with equal health and bodily strength. The one will sink and fail; the other, with determined effort, scales the summit. Has not volition, in this case at least, a creative power, a faculty of calling up force out of nothing—that is, out of no material source?

As a climber ascends a mountain, heat disappears from his body; the same statement applies to animals performing work. For every pound raised by a steam-engine, an equivalent quantity of its heat disappears; for every step the climber ascends, an amount of heat, equivalent jointly to his own weight and the height to which it is raised, is lost to his body. It would appear to follow from this, that the body ought to grow colder in the act of climbing or working; whereas universal experience proves it to grow warmer. The solution of the seeming contradiction is found in the fact, that when the muscles are exerted, augmented respiration and increased chemical action set in. The bellows which urge oxygen into the fire within are more briskly blown; and thus, though heat actually disappears as we climb, the loss is more than compensated by the increased activity of the chemical processes. Nevertheless, if our frame be heated by bodily exercise, we must not forget that it is at the expense of our stock of fuel. Physically considered, the law that rules the operations of the steam-engine rules the operations of the climber. The strong will can draw largely upon the physical energy furnished by the food; but it can *create* nothing. The function of the will is to *apply* and *direct*, not to create. The proof lies in the need of rest, and in the prostration often felt after unusual effort, even when successful.

When we augment the temperature of the body by labour, *a portion* only of the excess of heat generated is applied to the performance of the work. Suppose a certain amount of food to be oxidised, or burnt, in the body of a man in a state of repose; the quantity of heat produced in the process is exactly that which we should obtain from the direct combustion of the food in an ordinary fire. But, suppose the oxidation of the food to take place while the man is performing work; the heat then generated in the body falls short of that which could be obtained from direct combustion. An amount of heat is missing, equivalent to the work done. Supposing the work to consist in the development of heat by friction, then the amount of heat thus generated outside of the man's body, would be exactly that which was wanting within the body, to make the heat there generated equal to that produced by direct combustion.

It is easy (by means of the "mechanical equivalent") to determine the amount of heat consumed by a mountaineer in lifting his own body to any elevation. The Professor—may his shadow never grow less!—when lightly clad, weighs one hundred and forty pounds. What is the amount of heat consumed, in his case, in climbing from the sea level to the top of Mont Blanc?

The height of the mountain is fifteen thousand seven hundred and seventy-four feet; for every pound of his body raised to a height of seven hundred and seventy-two feet, a quantity of heat is consumed, sufficient to raise the temperature of a pound of water one degree Fahr. Consequently, on climbing to a height of fifteen thousand seven hundred and seventy-four feet, or about twenty and a half times seven hundred and seventy-two feet, he consumes an amount of heat sufficient to raise the temperature of one hundred and forty pounds of water, twenty and a half degrees Fahr. If, on the other hand, he could seat himself on the top of the mountain and perform a glissade down to the sea level, the quantity of heat generated by the descent would be precisely equal to that consumed in the ascent.

Measured by one's feelings, the amount of exertion necessary to reach the top of Mont Blanc is very great. Still, the energy which performs this feat would be derived from the combustion of some two ounces of carbon. In the case of an excellent steam-engine, about one-tenth of the heat employed is converted into work; the remaining nine-tenths being wasted in

the air, the condenser, &c. In the case of an active mountaineer, as much as one-fifth of the heat due to the oxidation of his food may be converted into work: hence, as a working machine, the animal body does much more than the steam-engine. We see, however, that the engine and the animal derive, or may derive, these powers from the self-same source. We can work an engine by the direct combustion of the substances we employ as food; and if our stomachs were so constituted as to digest coal, we should, as Helmholtz has remarked, be able to derive our energy from it. The grand point permanent throughout all these considerations is, that *nothing new is created.*

We can make no movement which is not accounted for by the contemporaneous extinction of some other movement. And, howsoever complicated the motions of animals may be, whatsoever may be the change which the molecules of our food undergo within our bodies, the whole energy of animal life consists in the falling of the atoms of carbon and hydrogen and nitrogen, from the high level they occupy in the food, to the low level they occupy when they quit the body. But what has enabled the carbon and the hydrogen to fall? What first raised them to the level which rendered the fall possible? We have already learned that it is the sun. It is at his cost, that animal heat is produced and animal motion accomplished. Not only, then, is the sun chilled, that we may have our fires, but he is likewise chilled that we may have our powers of locomotion.

We can raise water by mechanical means to a high level; that water, in descending by its own gravity, may be made to assume a variety of forms, and to perform various kinds of mechanical work. It may be made to fall in cascades, rise in fountains, twirl in the most complicated eddies, or flow along a uniform bed. It may, moreover, be employed to turn wheels, wield hammers, grind corn, or drive piles. Now, there is no power *created* by the water during its descent. All the energy which it exhibits is merely the parcelling out and distributing of the original energy which raised it up on high.

Thus, also, as regards the complex motions of a clock or a watch; they are entirely derived from the energy of the hand which winds it up. Thus, also, the singing of the little Swiss bird in the International Exhibition of 1862; the quivering of its artificial organs, the vibrations of the air which struck the ear as melody, the flutter of its little wings, and all other motions of the pretty automaton; were simply derived from the force by which it was wound up.

The matter of our bodies is that of inorganic nature. There is no substance in the animal tissues which is not primarily derived from the rocks, the water, and the air. Are the forces of organic matter, then, different in kind from those of inorganic? All the philosophy of the present day tends to negative the question; and to show that it is the directing and compounding, in the organic world, of forces equally belonging to the inorganic, that constitutes the mystery and miracle of vitality.

Still, though the progress and development of science may seem unlimited, there is a region apparently beyond her reach. Given the nature of a disturbance, in water, air, or ether, we can infer, from the properties of the medium, how its particles will be affected. In all this, we deal with physical laws, and the mind runs along the line which connects the phenomena from beginning to end. But, when we endeavour to pass by a similar process from the region of physics to that of thought, we meet a problem transcending any conceivable expansion of the powers we now possess. Thus, though the territory of science is wide, it has its limits, from which we look with vacant gaze into the region beyond; and having thus exhausted physics, and reached its very rim, the real mystery yet looms beyond us.

A SERPENT IN ARCADIA.

Your honourable disclosures, Sir, awarded to my unveiling of a Snake in a Arena—(it was you as assisted me to that title of my dubious Cousin)—incite me to offer you a second appeal under circumstances which ensued to myself and another, after our expatriation from a lordly mansion, where if halcyon Peace was not always found (as the song says) Perquisites largely acrued.*

Shortly after that mutual demolition, made public in a precedent story—Me and Miss Mary, like our first parents when cast afloat on Egypt's desert, united our hopes and hearts. Prudent the scheme might not be conceded—but prudence is wintry comfort to loving ones that bleed in company—not to mention united parties being two in the same bark, unless opposing tempests diverges them.

Though united—me to Miss Mary—it was agreed that the nuptial tie should be adjourned in promulgation. The most nourished plan may eventuate to grief, if secresy does not preside. Her Majesty, I have heard my former Lord say, if once a thousand times, would yield the brightest jewel in her possession, rather than express what she is machinating against other royal sovereigns which discretion precludes naming. And if those who long may reign over us, can only thus make good their projections—what are their lowly subjects to defend them with, in case Curiosity leads the van?

There is classes, Sir, you will admit, which when they come down on us, finds the most robust nerves not too much for the task of parrying. And that Mings, he is such. Blighted by the thunder which had emanated from most of the aristocractic families in our connextion, and baffled in attempts to elicit new openings, he was compelled to abandon his photographicaty as a medium of subsistence, and to attack

* See An Area Sneak, page 282, in the last volume.

new channels of life. It was like him to seek the sinews from one he had perjured so deeply as myself and partner. But the boldness among them of his order, is a bottomless pit.

I should calmly prelude, Sir, by stating, that when me and Miss Mary no longer, united our hands and hopes, discussions as to our path naturally rose on the horizon. Candour would forbid my denying that she has a sweet taste in the milliners' business, as many a head-dress from her hands associated with names of French origin could testify, did her previous lady's wardrobe speak sincerely of former days. We sat on the subject; and alive to what is permanent in fashions and what is momentary, "Mary," said I, "Bonnets is what all English females, actuated by the pure dictates of their sex, must subscribe to." Mr. Schmalz the courier, at whom my Lord has flung his boots one hundred times if once (as Mr. Clover, the butler of other days, will authenticate in your venerable organ of opinion if required), has mentioned that in foreign parts, parties wear shawls and veils, and sometimes go as bare as a fan and a flower, by way of covering for the hair of nature and art; but were these to be converted into examples? Forbid it old English truth, and modesty and decoration. Sir! as I am sure you will admit, who never allow the language of our born enemies to pollute your own fashionable and sweetly popular fictions!

And thus it was agreed among us to organise a Bonnet Emporium in an Arcade, which, not being an Area Sneak, I do not publish its name. But the deference of the promulgation of our nuptial tie having been decided on, analogous consequences ensued. It is more genteeler to present bonnets on a plate, as executed by Mademoiselle Mireille than as Mrs. Wignett. Because every heart in your native home will subscribe to the fact, that maiden names attracts, however attesting be the flight of Time. View our theatres, honoured Sir, and consider what is requisite there! And excuses was cogent in our peculiar case, owing to the course which our chart of operations had agreed on itself to take. It was of consequence that my antecedents should repose in the background, out of deference to prosperity in our conjoint undertaking.

Well, our Emporium was taken in the Arcade —private residence being in other parts—and a heinous expense having been incurred in a frontispiece of plate-glass, which displayed the offspring of my partner's taste, aided by a Mademyselle from Paris (of whom I regret you will have further to hear). She was complimented by all the jealousy of the vicinity—so superior was the style of our articles exposed. I was backwards and forwards, under the guise of a casual person; having entered into engagements with several of the Exhibition people. Painting gentlemen are sadly short of models to attract; and a careless poetical cultivation of beard, now emancipated from the thraldom of service, imparted a new aspect to that of other days. So that in my own sphere I was not seldom in request; and will say that the pictures which was animated by my presence attracted crowds in Trafalgar Square (more of which if time and diffidence permit at a future juncture). My partner, too, observed that when I was backwards and forwards—mostly sitting at the Arcade, as a casual purchaser, and difficult to please—those hours was the briskest as regarded custom; sometimes to the amount of plenteous ladies. Shops not frequented by gentlemen are little thought of among the fair sex.

Judge, then, Sir, of my feelings, when—one day, coming backwards and forwards as usual, a little stiff with standing to Mr. Peeks, as Sappho's youngest son, on the occasion of the latter being struck with lightning—I finds, as bold as brass, in instillation where I should have been—the party, whom your bolt bursting from its cloud judiciously entitled a snake—my downcast cousin. Mings!!! Seedy indeed, he looked so much so as to be disservient to the Emporium; but no customers was present. Mademyselle taking her meals up-stairs. And if I was ever glad that those French females are long and greedy over their food, I was glad then—since Mings, I hoped, was only a passing call, and I was determined to purvent it as such. But a match for a snake, what unarmed mortal can be?

"Timothy," said Mings, springing up from my chair, so loud that half the Arcade could hear it. "This is your game, is it? I thought so, when I saw Mademysel Mireille, though *she* wouldn't own it. O woman! woman!"

"Mings," said I, "after the ruin you have wrought, be polite if you cannot be anything solider. My wife and I are one." And I pulled up the look of a Spartan, which I had been requested to assume by Mr. Eager, when intent on his great picture of Tiberius, in his ruins, sitting on the domains of Carthage.

"Your *wife!*" and Mings he laughed like the serpent as he is. "Your *wife!* Come, you old Timothy, let us look into this. If so be you are married, let us know why it is you are like the ostrich that conceals its crest in the burning strand of the Desert? We used to be in one boat, and if so, why so no more? Is this to be a secret among three, or two? And by the way, if you have half-a-crown about you, hand it over. I came out without change."

Who could have parried this? and yet if daggers could have struck an individual to his culpable heart, they was in my eyes, as I handed over the silver to Mings. He endured as callous as an icicle.

"Well," says he, "Cousin Timothy, if this *is* a secret marriage of yours, I do not see why I should not be best man after the fact."

"Mings," says I, "beware what you do, and consider your end. In this abode, no more Tancreds reside for traitors to photographicate. We have parted, let it be once for all!" And as I looked at the door, I looked at it expressively, recollecting what had passed when Mr. Bonerville was getting up his picture of the Bride of Lammermoor, in which I was accountable for the HERO's posture.

But such as him takes no hints: delicacy being emitted in their composition. "Timothy," says Mings, as loud as before, "photography and I have parted. I am now an organ of public opinion—secretary to an influentious paper."

I shook, Sir, as I heard my Cousin's appeal; knowing, by yourself, what those who rule them papers are equal to do, or to undo—and supposing from his imperiousness, that he was connected somewhere. Who knew but with Punch? My partner and me had often in our maiden days talked Punch over as a salubrious influence on the haughty classes of this world.

It proved not Punch, however, Sir. "I dare say, Timothy," said Mings, sticking his thumbs in the arm-holes of his waistcoat, and crossing his legs for the entire afternoon, "that, reader though you are not, you may have heard speak of the Orb of Fashion. I am one of the principal writers, and it proves you sadly in arrears of the world, that I don't see it lying about here; though of course it *is* a cut above the Arcade."

"Mings," says I, in unfeigned unacquaintanceship—and yet who would be behindhand in duty to one's order, when reflections was cast on our neighbourhood?—"Our copy goes, instantaneous we have finished it, to Lady Maria: because my Lady will read no paragrams save those of my wife's marking."

"Timothy," was his answer,—the serpent, he knew as well as I did, that I had never set eyes on any of their Orbs:—"Timothy, if so be, yours is to act the part of a true relation: and I am glad to make it up with you. Then if you have another half-crown about you, it will be five shillings, and such is even money."

Sir, weakness, when knavery assails, has been, alas! too deeply my motto,—and that extortionists takes cruel advantage of it, the sad sequel shall disclose. Besides, I heard Mademazelle coming down; and he was not that aspect of person one likes to be seen lending money to. So I had not time to weigh, and I said, imparting the second loan, "There, Mings, good day."

"Good day!" says Mings, "I've not begun yet! and it was only for your advantage, and not the Orb's, that I called to consult you on a matter of business."

I see I was in for it, and felt the labyrinth round my neck; and he saw I saw, and I saw *he* saw and was alive to the labyrinth, by the twinkle of his eye. If a customer had come in, who knows what might have been diverted? "Madmysel," said I to our assistant, who at the juncture descended, "perhaps you'll go up for a quarter of an hour. There are them tuberoses to look to. Private business predominates."

Madmysel Claire did not like dismission, French females being curious, and Mings having fixed her with his glass in a manner suggestional of vanity, against which no female heart is proof.

"Madmysel!" says Mings, with a little laugh, when she had ascended. "Come, I say, is *she* married too? and if married, what's *her* name?"

"Mings," said I, "jocularity may trespass beyond the brink. My wife's assistant—all our assistants up-stairs" (the phib injured nobody), "are unmarried; thus leaving them more at liberty to indulge exclusive energies on the bonnets. And so, on the spot, before we are interrupted, about business. If you have any proposial to propose, propose it sincerely."

"Proposial! I believe you!" and the insidious laugh of the hyæna was repeated. "What a thing for your Emporium (*Mademoiselle Mireille's*, I should say) to be promoted in the Orb of Fashion! the sole depôt in the Arcade which can hail that proud distinction. Come, Timothy, since Peace it is to be, shall I open our columns to your interests—(*Mademoiselle Mireille's*, I should say?) Since Mrs. Wignett would not attune with the expectations of our aristocratic subscribers."

I own I was snared, Sir, never having seen or heard of the Orb of Fashion till that juncture: yet knowing how proud the power the Press can wield, as indeed, Sir, who elucidates like yourself?

"Mings," said I, "do you mean handsome reciprocation; and not as before, when your imprudence drove myself and partner from our anchors in a lordly home, to embark in these precarious seas? How about my wife's Emporium and the Orbit of Fashion?"

"Timothy," says he, "suspicion has been too much your forte. Beware now! Was we to talk in our Orb of Mrs. Wignett's bonnet-shop in the Arcade, would Lady Maria read the paragraphs of Madmysel Mireille's marking?"

The serpent! But I felt that his sarcasms (alive to the screen I had erected) bore a core of truth in them; and that we were at his mercy. And the Orb of Fashion—who knew?—might one day, in its galaxy among the fair, rival the Times. "Mings," I said, "if there is talk to be of my wife's Emporium in the Orb of Fashion, what are your views? State them in an aboveboard and graceful manner. Of course" (for I struggled to the last, Sir, to assert my independence), "the Orb will pay handsomely for information?"

"Pay!" roared Mings, bursting out into such a cataract of derision that the vicinity was alarmed, and two opposites and a casual customer came rushing in, inquiring was some one in spasms; and down came Madmysel Claire, expecting also a paroxysm. Scenes has always been my bane: and Mings, the cockatrice, knew it, and that I wished to cut this catastrophe short, so he said in my ear, "Timothy, give me some dinner somewhere, and we'll soon square matters all round, over a glass of wine."

I was too thankful to extricate, with a view to peace and customers, to have made any head against Mings, had he insisted on tea and supper no less than dinner. At the Yellow Posts, on that lurid and fatal day of the compract, he cost me fifteen shillings, besides the five he had procured out of me. On the whole, a sovereign.

Nor did he let we two part till it was settled that Mings was to be on our free list of Bonnets, so long as his Organ of Opinion devoted itself once a fortnight to the interests of the Emporium, by awarding it a prominential place in the annals

of establishments repaired to by fair and noble clients of the higher classes. Shylock, Sir, did not imply a bargain more ruthless; but I yielded: since to the power of the Press I have been always implicitly dismissive; and thus I humbly trust that your electric beam will make that insidious blighter of hopes by false expedients wither a second time (as at Belshazzar's Feast), be the glare of his prosperity ever so transcendent.

For some weeks, almost up to the point of a quarter, the halcyon Peace presided; and the Orb and the Emporium moved in intimate harmoniousness. Mings, he is not much of a author, and in Epithets of Taste, he was for ever coming backwards and forwards, pretending that Millinery was alien to his horizon, and applying copiously to Madmysel Claire for exactitude in terms. Our assistant was more down than up-stairs; just then, circumstances, which crown matrimonial life, making it expedient for my wife to refrain from extraneous publicity; and so, to distract curiosity, it was denounced in the Arcade, and advertised in the Orb of Fashion, that the extensiveness of the Emporium, also to establish foreign agents, would necessiate Madmyselle Mireille to repair to Paris; Madmyselle Claire (and our assistants up-stairs) conducting the business during her departure. The advantages taken of this attitude of events by yonder black and twining serpent, would baffle a catalogue. It was not solely being backwards and forwards for epithets; but at meal-times on every possible occasion. The tea and muffins he drank would fill a volume; and did the muffins fail to be fresh, Mings began to look gloomy, and state that the Orb of Fashion had been strictured on by malignant opponents, for showing indiscretional favours to this Emporium. Other Arcades, to hear him talk, was pressing in their advancements on his pen. How little could I dream that his Orb was verging on its last legs. Just then, secure as the Mariner of the Sea, who lies becalmed above a couch of coral, I was concentrating on Hamlet for Mr. Titiens Pink's great picture; so that you, Sir, who have seen it, and therefore have admitted as you must, that here was no milk-and-water Royal Dane, such as foreign versions have deluded old England's metropolis to subscribe in,—must be equal the same, aware that the fire of frenzy luminating and sparkling from my eyes, was no easy mood to assume for hours at a sitting, on five mornings out of six (and sometimes, to be candid, on Sunday afternoons), especially on the part of one, whose criterion of character has always been confessed to be amenity.

I say, Sir, I dreamed delusively, that the alliance was sound, and the Orb and the Emporium flourishing like twin sisters of the soul. My wife, Sir, she was more early awake to the mysteries veiled by the curtain of serpentine audacity. But this I subscribed to the irritability of her predicament; and did she protest against such a profusion of visitations and objection respecting muffins, on the part of Mings,—alert to pacify, "Mary," I would say, "recollect how our joint interests, aided by them papers, is flourishing,—and the proud position of the Emporium, especially since our recent inventions."

For the Emporium had been copious and fertile. I will only name three, to each of which the disquisitions in the Orb of Fashion, Mings declared, had caused the palm of success to fall. The SWEET HAT, decked with primroses and other artless weeds, fit for the use of the young; but which was seized with such ardour, that there was eight middle-aged gentlewomen wearing spectacles, in the Emporium at once, mutually pushing, and using rude terms, in order to secure the first choice. The STRONG-MINDED VADE-MECUM, destined for those lonely tourists of the sex, to whom self-protection is more apposite than absorption by male flatteries. This, too, had its hour, mostly among the dissenting classes; Quakers, even, who, as my wife used to say, must be sick of confinement to dreary coal-boxes. The ROYAL NON-PAREIL, which her Gracious Majesty had expressed she had never seen anything to compare with it. Two days after that sentence was promulgated in the Orb, the Emporium was inundated by a commission from Hull and other districts; and six cases was despatched within the week. Madmysel Claire, because of the stress, included she was obliged to stand out for double salary;—which being demurred, she declared her plan of writing a letter to the Orb, also to the Society for Cruelty to Animals. (I have since had cause to ascertain that her rapacious course was prompted by that adder in male form.) Loth as is every generous heart to succumb, be the crisis ever so impendent, caution and my wife's prospects kicked the beam. We acceded, and Madmysel Claire received her ill-gotten gains. It may have been a mercy that the run on the ROYAL NON-PAREIL sunk into the sand as rapidly as it had originated.

What boots it? Prospects smiled; and who but a snake such as he, could enter into the yawning volcano beneath our feet? It now was but a week, when my wife's departure to Paris (which in reality Paddington) was to take place, and she and Madmysel Claire had invariable preliminaries to operate, during this period of my partner's abstinence, when our assistant was to take the ruling part.

"Timothy," said my wife, at the close of one of their committees in union. "Flesh and blood can stand such no longer. The Emporium will crumble unless rescued; and as I know you are a poor chicken-hearted creature, I have written to him to tell him to desist. Pillaged I, and the child that is unborn, will not be; whatever their Orbs may say and do."

"Mary," was my reply, "don't excite hysterics, which is of serious importance as you are. Pillagers cannot exist in the Arcade—during three beadles parade it, as you are aware, till closing time."

"Timothy," she broke out (of late her temper had been more boisterous than elegant), "if you are a goose, out with it like a man! And you *are* a goose or you would have defended your lawful wife against the pillagement of that speedy and ill-conditioned sponge—that beau-

tiful cousin of yours. Unless you are in league, and this looks fearfully like it."

"If you scream, Mary," says I, "we shall have the neighbours in, and reality will be disclosed." She adopted my hint, because she felt its value, and dropped her tone. But this was what she proceeded, so far as tears would let her,—and the story did look grasping to an amount of alarm.

It was the invicious acts by which that smooth-faced viper, Mings, had availed himself of our compact with a vengeance! During the past three months, by hook or by crook, he had extracted (the free list as presumption) Bonnets from the Emporium to the tune of two a week, in addition to all he had partaken of at our cost —grog not having been touched on in the above, when business hours was over, and we would assume our two cigars, and interchange on subjects of art and aristocracy. What had Mings done with the bonnets, which had been the victims of his predatory covetousness? What, indeed?

"And you have writ," I faltered to my wife, "to Mings, enjoining future temperance?"

"I believe you, Timothy," said she—"and his feet in our tea and muffins he won't set again soon. Upwards of thirty pounds' worth of good bonnets gone, as if any of their Orbs merited such a plunder." And on this, though my partner had reduced her voice prudentially, Nature and Vexation triumphed. She went off on the spot; and to bring her to, and to get her to our home, unseen, unsuspected, and the whole circumstances undreamed-of by envious eyes, that is always lurking what secrets they can pick up, was a task to distance giant nerve. It was effectuated though; but if my hair that night had turned white, as Cleopatra's did while wooing the asp, on the eve of execution, what mortal could have found it improper?

The bolt was shot, however. Ominous silence pervaded all. Mings and the Emporium were two:—and as coincidential, I should say, that, during that very week, the Orb of Fashion fluttered to the close of its existence, and its spirit took wing to some other sphere.

I avoided coping with the familiar haunts for a few days—because Mings, I knew, was equal to the production of any sensation, gain and revenge being his sole object. A riot in the Arcade would not have conduced to the predominance we had ever maintained. Then, for that week, the onerous duties of my separate profession—one hour a butterfly gay deceiver of the Court of Spain—the next a melancholy Faust brooding over the crucibles on his anvil—was absorbing: not to speak of home vicissitudes, possibly to be ascribed to past reserves of reality. For many days, ere our boy entered this mortal hemisphere, she was ailing and low; and if ever female was actuated by jealousy on that, or any similarly posthumous occasion, my wife was. To soothe cost me many anxious moments of care;—and retrospections of lighter days of fancy and freedom, now exiled for ever.

But when the hour of danger was past, since not a syllable had been breathed from the Emporium, and as Mings, that cruellest of crocodiles, had not turned up (quenched for ever was my hopes, by recent disruptions), I wended my way thither to the familiar place of dear hopes and recollections, one Tuesday evening. I thought the officials glared scornfully as I passed, and this was borne out by the public sarcasmatic expression of the vicinity. My heart drooped. When a storm is a-going to descend, some parties, especially them of a delicate cast, is acquainted beforehand.

I reached the beloved precincts. The spells of decease pervaded them. The shutters was up. No light, no sound, no bonnets. On the exterior side was a placard, thus:

A CARD. — MRS. WIGNETT'S BUSINESS being interrupted by her Confinement, the lovers of Real Bonnets are directed to the Parthenion of French and Female Taste, No. 17, seven doors lower down on the opposite side. The Parthenion is conducted by Mademoiselle Claire, the primum mobile of Mrs. Wignett's establishment.

Mrs. Wignett's friends will be glad to hear that her recovery is proceeding most salubriously.

And so myself and partner were shut up a second time by that Mings.

BOUNCING BOYS.

WHAT clever fellows the rising generation of boys ought to be when they grow up! What splendid opportunities they are having compared to those which fell in the way of the boys of the last age! The familiar playthings of the boys of to-day are the applications of arts and sciences, which the last generation scarcely dreamed of, and which the most thoughtful men of the time spent their whole lives, and sometimes broke their hearts, in the endeavour to fathom and discover. All these problems of science and art, then so hopelessly meshed and knotted, the boys of this day can unloose familiar as the laces of their Balmoral boots—I will not say garters, for in these advanced and elastic times such adjuncts of dress have become obsolete, even for the purposes of metaphor. The Shakespeare of the future will not have such simple things as garters to deal with when he wishes to show how easily some accomplished modern can unloose the Gordian knot. Henceforth, Puck and his girdle will be a fool to the Atlantic telegraph. But as to these modern boys — boys who are born, christened, breeched, and married, and set up in life all in a trice!—those boys take away my breath. I wonder sometimes if they can possibly be of the same genus as the boys with whom I associated when I myself was a boy. I paid a visit lately to a gentleman in the country, and in going over the house to view its lions I was shown into a room where my host's boys printed a weekly newspaper *for their own amusement!* There were all the appliances of a printing-office: cases, galleys, rules, imposing stones, and presses; and two young gentlemen, whose united ages, probably, did not amount to five-and-twenty, were so far familiar with their

use as to be able, unaided, to compose and print a weekly sheet containing news and articles of their own writing! I thought of *my* play-room and what it contained. I had a vision of a penny top, a popgun roughly made from a branch of alder-tree, a kite composed of a halfpenny cane and a sheet of brown paper, a worsted ball wound upon an old barrel bung, and a teetotum.

Again; the other evening I went to a party, and I had scarcely entered the house when my host's two boys carried me off into the garden to take my photograph. One, quite a little fellow, posed me in the chair, instructed me to look at a certain spot, and warned me of that principle of the convex lens which has a tendency to enlarge feet and hands which are placed too much in advance of the rest of the body. The other boy, meanwhile, was in a dark room, playing with subtle chemicals, of whose nature and properties his grandfather the eminent chemist had never even dreamed. In less than five minutes these two youngsters had used one of the closest secrets of nature to fix my image on a piece of glass. It was as easy a feat for them as it was for me to lift up my top, while spinning, in a spoon or in the hollow of my hand.

I had another vision: Of a party at home, when I, as a boy, the age of that juvenile photographer, was considered rather a bore, and was only permitted to bother the guests for half an hour or so after dinner. It was not supposed that I had any entertaining powers whatever. The guests, in the goodness of their nature, would kindly endeavour to entertain me, by giving me an apple, and perhaps telling me a pretty little story, all in simple words of one syllable. After which I was carefully sent to bed before supper. But these modern boys: they bring you their newspaper to look at; they photograph you, they play the accompaniments to your songs, they astonish your weak mind with the magnesium light, they sit up to supper, they tell you the latest news by telegram—in fact, *they* entertain *you*. When I was a boy, my stock of play literature consisted of some half-dozen sixpenny books, such as Jack the Giant Killer, Puss in Boots, the History of Cock Robin, and an abridgment of the Arabian Nights. I remember that I kept them locked up in a deal box, and was exceedingly chary of lending them, or even letting any one look at them. But boys now-a-days take in their monthly and weekly magazines, correspond with the editor, answer riddles and rebuses, contribute puzzles and engage in chess tournaments by correspondence; nay, they club subscriptions to Mudie's, and read all the new sensation novels as they appear. I see some square-capped boys, of not more than fourteen years, going to school every morning reading their penny newspapers. I have no doubt whatever that they read the law and police reports under their desks when they ought to be learning their lessons. Boys and hobbedehoys used to be a nuisance, because they were lumpy, and awkward, and uninteresting; and because they were too young to share in the conversation of grown-up people. But now-a-days, if boys are voted a nuisance at all—which they will not tamely permit—it is because they are too clever by half, and know a great deal too much.

Inwardly and outwardly the British boy has undergone a great change. Everything about him is in an advanced state. His mind is manly and so are his clothes. Your modern infant grows so fast that you never can catch him in jackets. When he emerges from his swaddling-clothes, he slips through your fingers, and vaults into a tailed coat. He casts aside his feeding-bottle, and his pap-spoon, to clap a cigar or a meerschaum-pipe in his mouth.

The modern youth forces his whiskers, as the modern market-gardener forces his asparagus. He has no pause for lay-down collars of the old patterns, nor for a round cap with a tassel, such as the boys of the Own Book used to wear. He is a new pattern of boy altogether. Look at the frontispiece of an old Treasury of Knowledge, and see what the British boy *was*. There is his papa—also of a pattern peculiar to the period—seated at a table with a terrestrial globe, a retort, a pair of compasses, and a heap of books at his elbow, allegorical of the entire tree of knowledge and the whole circle of the sciences. You will observe that his papa wears a high-collared coat, a very short waistcoat, and tightly-fitting trousers, which, when your paint-box is at hand, you are irresistibly tempted to colour yellow. Your idea of that papa is, that he has always been a papa, and that his whole mission on earth is to teach the use of the globes to his son with rigid paternal severity; just as your idea of the boy is that he was born a boy like that, and for no other purpose on earth but to be taught the use of the globes and overawed by his papa. Look at that boy. His outline is composed of a series of curves—curves for his cheeks, curves for his arms, curves for his legs, as if his papa had constructed him with the pair of compasses. He is the good old-fashioned sort of boy, who was fond of pudding, who over-ate himself when he went out visiting, who robbed orchards, who had all the complaints of infancy in rapid succession, and never missed one on any account; who carried gunpowder in his pocket, who was always in mischief, and who, as regarded his most honourable curve, seemed to be specially adapted and cut out for chastisement. When I look at the portraits of that boy of a past age, I can quite understand how the schoolmasters of the period could not keep their hands off him. The whole physical development of him was a standing invitation to the cane.

If schoolmasters don't flog now, it is not because they have lost faith in the virtues of birch, but because the modern boy is morally and physically repulsive to the cane. Those inviting curves of his have been smoothed down; his jackets have assumed tails. He wears gloves also, and is thus armed against correction at all points. Intellectually, too, how could you think of administering flagellation to a boy who writes, edits, prints, and publishes a newspaper, or be guilty of the outrage of boxing the ears of a boy who is versed

in the properties of nitrate of silver, and knows how to decompose the light of the sun?

I repeat, that these boys, when they grow up, ought to be very clever fellows. If there are any new discoveries to be made, any more secrets to be wrested from Nature, those boys ought to be able to accomplish the work without difficulty. They have at their fingers' ends, settled and defined, all those important elementary principles which their fathers and grandfathers had to test and settle and define before they went any further. The foundation has been laid for them; they have but to build the superstructure; and effect novelty by varying the plan.

I think it possible, however, that the intellectual growth of the modern boy may be a little too rapid, and that, like trees which grow quickly, his timber may be rather too soft for the solid purposes of life's carpentry. Difficulties are so smoothed for him, and he is set out in life so well provided with all the necessaries for the journey, that it may be feared he will have too little occasion to exert himself. In the generation which is passing away, some of the most remarkable men of their time were the architects of their own fortunes. The temples of fame and honour which they built for themselves they built from the very foundations. They began single-handed, with a pick and a spade, to dig out the stubborn ground before they proceeded to lay the bricks. But the sons of these men come to their architecture with white kid gloves on, and lay fancy foundation-stones with silver trowels. Suppose the edifice were to be completely destroyed, would they be fit to dig and carry bricks as their fathers did before them? I don't say there is any lack of energy or pluck (I use the word, though I detest it) about the rising generation. Those qualities are as inherent and as well cultivated in Englishmen as ever they were; but I *do* fancy that there is a growing disposition to exercise them more for ornamental than useful purposes.

The middle class of the present generation is much better off than the middle class that preceded it. Half a century ago the parents of the middle class were nobodies: it was the sons who struggled and made their way and raised themselves. But now the important persons are the parents; the sons merely inherit the silver spoon. They are born with it in their mouths, and they go on supping their turtle soup with it as complacently as if they had won it for themselves—more so. Tradesmen and tradesmen's sons act as if their business were entailed like an earl's estate, as if there were a law of primogeniture for ironmongery and tea dealing. I have now in my eye half a dozen tradesmen's sons, who, as soon as they arrived at the supposed years of discretion, were immediately set up with a house, a wife, a horse, a plate basket, and an account at a banker's. I meet them occasionally in first-class dining-rooms, where they fare sumptuously every day, and eat turtle and drink champagne as by right. The inquiry I wish pursued is this: Is the rising generation of the middle class, with this education and these habits, likely to sustain its substantial character and position? Is there not some danger to them of the hard working class below, rearing an active, energetic, well-educated progeny, which will sooner or later step forward and push the present middle classes from their stools?

I will not pursue this branch of the inquiry further, but leave it to those who may have a wider experience to assist their philosophy. I prefer to turn to the intellectual aspects and influences of our modern youth. In one respect the boy of to-day is much better educated than the boy of yesterday. Schools have improved of late years, and the system of teaching is generally more intelligent and rational. Parroting from books has gone out of fashion, and boys are taught to understand the meaning of the words they utter. While Greek and Latin still maintain their place in the curriculum, more attention is paid to modern languages, and almost every boy at a good commercial school now learns French and German. The use of the globes is no longer such a profound depth of learning as it was in the old days. Chemistry takes its place, and the retort of the frontispiece is warranted by reality. But with all the advantages of an intelligent and comprehensive system of education, the modern boy is at a disadvantage in respect of certain other matters of very great importance. I refer to the softening and civilising influence of the belles lettres, the "artes," as the well-known Latin aphorism has it. I am afraid the modern boy is not sufficiently brought under this influence. Not that he does not read enough, for he reads perhaps too much; but he does not read the right thing. Question one of those very clever boys who print newspapers and take photographs, and you will most probably find that while he is well up in the periodical literature of the day, the magazines and journals, and the novels of the hour, he has never read the Arabian Nights and Robinson Crusoe. Boys, now-a-days, do not begin with sixpenny editions of Jack the Giant Killer. They skip that innocent and delightful starting-point in literature, and vault over many intermediate stages besides. I find well-educated young men of twenty who have never read the Waverley Novels, who know nothing of the glorious romance of Ivanhoe, save what they have gathered from a parody in some so-called comic publication, or a burlesque at the theatres. I once knew a popular author, all of the present time, who had never read the Vicar of Wakefield. Our young men also skip the poets. There was a time when parents and guardians had to complain that their sons and wards were Shakespeare mad, and wasted their time in declaiming plays; there was a time, not long gone, when Byron and Shelley had to be hid away from impressionable youths who were too much given to poetry. But, now-a-days, Shakespeare and Byron and the rest of the English classics lie with dust an inch thick upon them.

It is not likely that I am going to run down the literature of the day. It is, on the whole, better literature of its kind than has ever before been produced, and we have

authors and poets among us who are worthy to be mentioned with any who have gone before them. But we have too much fact, and too little fancy; too much mere Railway-art of literature, and too little respect for a work of Art. Every man who has learned Greek and Latin, and made himself acquainted with heathen mythology, is sensible—though perhaps he can scarcely explain how—of possessing an intellectual power derived from those branches of study. So, a similar power, a similar cultivation of the intellect and the understanding, is derived from an early acquaintance with fairy tales, with romances of chivalry, and with those pure and simple works of fiction such as Goldsmith's Vicar, which have been exemplars to all the greatest of the modern writers. It is not, perhaps, a good thing to frighten children with ghosts; but it is not altogether a good sign when children wake in the night to explain on scientific principles the moving shadow which their nurse has taken for a beneficent Fairy. Give children printing-presses, retorts, and chemicals, to play with, by all means; but don't let them skip the Arabian Nights. Let them wear out at least one jacket. Let us have had experience of Blue Beard, when we come to have a beard of our own. Let us have known a talking wolf, through Little Red Riding Hood, as well as the speechless wolf in the Zoological Gardens. The last navigator will be none the worse for having believed in Sindbad the Sailor; and I wager a thousand pounds to a shilling that my dear Professor Owen has had faith in the Roc.

POACHING AN ELK.

There are few of us who like shooting and have not at some time of our lives "done a little bit of poaching." Of course I refer to gentlemanly poaching. I am a J.P. now, and of course, Justly Particular. Still I have done one or two things of the sort one might be had up for, even since I have sustained magisterial honours. For instance, one night I made one of a party netting partridges, using the identical net, which had been taken a week before from a poacher who was caught in the fact, and to whom I gave three weeks' hard labour. But, let me add, I used the net on my own land, and with my own keepers, for I wished to settle the point whether a "well-bushed" field really offered any impediments to netting, and found that it got so inextricably hampered, that the partridges were safe.

But it is not of my peccadilloes at home that I am about to make confession. I fear there is scarce a country in Europe wherein I have not infringed the game laws; and, if the heinousness of the crime bears any direct proportion to the size of the animal unlawfully slain, I have been a poacher of the very utmost magnitude. For I have been, I confess it, an elk poacher, and an elk is an animal standing some seventeen or eighteen hands high, and weighing a good bit more than half a ton.

I was spending the summer in Norway. It was the year ('fifty-eight) of that terribly hot summer when the sheep died by scores in the parks, and became roast mutton as they lay upon the grass: so you may imagine what it was in a country where the sun was almost as hot at midnight as at noon. It was getting towards the end of July, and I was looking forward to the first of August with all the zest of an old grouse shooter. One day a young Norwegian student happened to put up at the same "station" where I was staying. He, too, was going to spend his vacation on the Fjelds, but disdaining such small fry as grouse and ptarmigan, soared at red-deer, reindeer, and elk. It was to our mutual interests. I, for instance, had a good stock of English powder, an unlimited supply of "Bristol bird's eye," and a brace of first-rate setters. He would not only be an agreeable companion, but would act as my interpreter.

A few remarks on the law relating to the preservation of elk are due in this place. It runs thus: "Any one shooting an elk before August 1st, or after October 31st, is liable to a penalty of forty dollars, half of which goes to the informer, and half to the poor-box of the district." Doubtless, in some respects, an excellent provision, as in a wild country like Norway, with its boundless forests and trackless Fjelds, it would be a sheer impossibility for any native game preserver to keep such a staff of employés as to render the poacher's avocation at all dangerous. By offering a bribe to the informer, the government hit on an ingenious and inexpensive scheme for the promotion of its object. But now mark the weak side! Say that the eatable portion of an elk weighs 800 lbs. In the matter of food therefore, alone, there will be a tolerable supply of meat through the winter. Then there is the hide, and the antlers, into the bargain. On the lowest computation, an elk is well worth thirty dollars. It is easy enough, therefore, for two persons to conspire against an elk, and while one of them does the poaching, his comrade acts as informer, and, by recovering half the penalty, both profit by the transaction.

We had just arrived at our quarters, after a long and dusty journey across the Dovre mountains. The house at which we put up lay on the borders of a large lake of surpassing loveliness. It looked so temptingly cool that we determined to enjoy the luxury of a bath, before going in to sup upon a dish of fresh caught char, which was in course of preparation. Never was bath more refreshing; and certainly never was tobacco more fragrant than when we laid down afterwards on the grass to be soothed by it. All was still; the lake as smooth as a looking-glass, and the sun just setting behind a snow-capped mountain in the distance. But the silence suddenly was broken by the sound of distant voices, and the splash of oars; and in a few minutes we could plainly discern two boats emerging from under the dark shadow of some rocky hills on the other side, apparently racing against each other. I pulled out my "binocular," and soon discovered what I should have taken

to be a large bough floating on the water about half a mile ahead of the boats, only that it was moving almost as quickly as the boats were. But Hans soon enlightened me, and with a sprinkling of genuine Norwegian ejaculations, which would look rather profane if translated literally, pronounced that the bough was an elk, and that the boats were in pursuit of it.

"Now shall we see a bit of fun; each boat belongs to a different farmery" (so he always called a farm-house), "and if one of them shoots the elk you will see such a race as never was!"

"But why shouldn't we try and bag him, Hans? We have our rifles. He is coming straight towards us; and I would gladly give ten pounds to shoot an elk. Down Carlo! Don! down sir," and we all hid ourselves behind a large rock. "You would give ten pounds? Good!" I heard Hans soliloquise, but took no notice at the time of his remark.

Meanwhile, the animal was rapidly approaching, evidently unconscious of any danger in the front. Nearer and nearer he came, straining every nerve to distance his pursuers. The shouts and gesticulations of the men in the boats, each trying to outstrip the other, and the anxiety of the elk to reach the shore, were quite equalled by my intense fear lest the boats should get the first shot.

"Now look you," whispered Hans, "he is making for yon point; he will stop half a second to shake the water off him directly he is on land. That is your time!"

"Good!"

The elk was now about a hundred yards off land. The leading boat was not more than a hundred and fifty yards behind; and two of the men in the bows were already standing up, rifle in hand, to let fly the moment the animal set foot on land. There was no time to be lost.

"Now look! he can feel the bottom."

The next moment I sent a bullet in behind the shoulder at forty yards, and the huge animal rolled over in the shallow water, splashing and struggling in the agonies of death. Quick as thought we rushed down to the spot, and dragged our quarry out of the water.

Meanwhile, the first boat had reached the shore, and we were soon surrounded by half a dozen savage-looking fellows, who, to judge from the way in which they spat and swung their arms about and shouted (one of them cried with passion), were cursing us by all the Scandinavian Gods. Presently the other boat came up, and there were now at least a dozen spectators, all of whom seemed to be in a furious state of excitement. This was rather alarming, and I turned round to speak to Hans to ask him what we had best do, when, to my horror, I could not see him anywhere. Where had he gone? He was close by me not a minute ago.

"Cowardly brute," I muttered, "to leave me among such a lot of savages," who, to judge by their looks, seemed ready to kill me. However, he was gone, that was certain, and I had only myself to rely on. Calling Don and Carlo close to me, who did not at all approve of the presence of so many strangers, I determined to take it coolly; and, quietly lighting my pipe, proceeded to flay my elk.

Whether it was that my friends thought me and the dogs dangerous, or whether my coolness puzzled them, I know not; but after staring at me a long while, for they found it was useless to talk to me, and after they had ejected the most prodigious quantity of saliva conceivable, they went off in sullen silence, and rowed back over the lake.

"Good!" I thought; "and now they have gone, I dare say Hans will crawl out of his hiding-place." I felt convinced he had sneaked somewhere under cover. "Hans! Hans!" I shouted.

Sure enough I heard his voice some distance off, and in a couple of minutes he appeared, out of breath and in a tremendous heat.

"It's all right," he began.

"All right! Yes! I dare say you are all right. But to go and leave a fellow in the lurch like that! You ought to be ashamed of yourself. Why, it's a wonder I'm not murdered and stiff."

"I've only been to the 'Foged' (magistrate) and laid an information against you for having shot the elk. It's all right!" replied Hans, smiling.

This was too much! I might have looked over his desertion, but to go and turn informer was cowardice of the most unpardonable kind!

Hans all the time had been laughing with delight; but, seeing that I was seriously angry, asked me to listen to what he had to say.

"Go on, sir," I said, in a dignified manner.

"Now, my good friend, did you not see one of the men slink off directly the boat came ashore?" I shook my head negatively.

"But I did! So that's your game, is it? Two can play at that, thought I. For you see he was off to the Foged to lay information against us. Now, I can't afford to pay twenty dollars if you can. Besides, as I am a candidate of theology, I didn't want to see my name in all the papers as a poacher. So I ran up to the 'station,' borrowed the man's pony, and set off, full gallop, to the Foged's house. Before I had gone half way, I saw my friend running along in the same direction as hard as he could. He did not recognise me till I came alongside, when, pulling off my hat, I shouted, 'Shall I give your compliments to the Foged.' He knew me then, and seeing the game was up, turned back. So I rode on, and told the Foged how that you had shot an elk, and how that I was very angry about it, and thought it my duty to lay an information against you."

And Hans enlightened me as to the law relating to elk which I have already mentioned, and of which I was then ignorant.

"My best Hans," said I, "I beg your pardon, but I really thought you were a humbug!"

"Of course you did. The Foged will be here directly, so I must play my part. Don't be angry if I abuse you soundly."

Before long, up came the said functionary, looking quite as important as I do on bench days, and began to write down the deposi-

tions. Hans played his part admirably, and was even complimented by the worthy old magistrate for his conduct, when he gave him as a reward half of the forty dollars which I handed over. Then, having once secured his reward, with consummate ability he began to find extenuating circumstances for me—"that I was an Englishman, unconscious of the law, &c."—till at last we all three became excellent friends, and, at a wink from Hans, I asked them both to come up to the house and sup with me. They accepted readily, and under the influence of a stiff glass of hot grog with, and a good London cigar, the old Foged's heart relented so far, that he actually offered to remit the fine. Of course I refused, and begged him to distribute it amongst the poor, only asking him not to let my name figure in the paper.

MODERN FRENCH MARRIAGES.

French laws and customs respecting marriage, although they cannot erase and obliterate the natural distinction of sex, confer complete equality and fraternity. A Frenchwoman is not only a wife at bed and board, she is also a partner in business and a joint proprietor, without whose consultation and consent no important step can be taken. She knows when a bill is due, as well as, or better than, her husband. She can consent to, or forbid, her children's marriage. She never sinks her maiden name, but attaches it to that of her spouse in a form very little differing from that of commercial associations. Mr. White starts a concern with Mr. Black; they announce their joint undertaking as White and Black. M. White married to Mdlle. Black, are known to the world as White-Black. A hyphen, or an and, makes all the difference. The same kind of fraternity also frequently occurs—quite as a matter of course, existing in the nature of things—in the talk talked, in the books read, in the songs listened to, and in the double meanings laughed at jointly by a Frenchman and his wife.

But while the laws of property and marriage do all they can to rivet the chains of matrimony, there are other influences which work in an opposite direction. Thus, moments of repulsion are sure to occur between a girl firmly grounded in a religion of rituals, scrupulous of small observances, and looking no further, and a man who believes few religious dogmas, or, if he admits their spirit, will not be fettered by their letter. But above every other cause likely to prove the germ of future estrangement, is the way in which French matches are made.

Many of the French themselves are far from being satisfied on this head, and have even the boldness to quote with approbation the advantages offered by the English system as far as happiness is concerned. Some acknowledge it in theory, and would, if they could, reconcile two opposites—interest and disinterestedness. As they cannot, the sacrifice required by disinterestedness proves much too hard to be accomplished. Like the young man in Scripture, they risk their chance of heaven rather than give up large possessions. The amount of recent literature relating to marriage, shows the heaving of the popular mind. We have The Dramas of Marriage, by Benjamin Gastneau; The Manufacture of Marriages, by Paul Féval; The Marriages of To-day, by Philibert Audebrand; and The Marriages of Paris, by Edmond About. Among all these matrimonial lucubrations, we greatly prefer M. Thévenin's "Marriage in the Ninteenth Century, as it is, and as it ought to be," which is at the same time serious, sensible, and pleasant.

French society, according to M. Thévenin, distinguishes two sorts of marriages; one called "of reason," the other "of inclination." An excellent treatise might be written on the respectable words which, in every age, society has employed to designate, or rather to screen, the ugliest realities. Every day we hear swindlers talk of honour, fanatics of moderation, poltroons of courage. In the wars of nations, both sides fight in the name of justice, right, and humanity. Marriage is not exempt from the same reproach. To call one sort of marriage "a marriage of reason," is to beg the question, close all debate, and condemn marriages of any other sort. It is the old story of one-half of the human race despising the prejudices of the other half, while religiously adhering to their own. What right have certain marriages to assume to themselves the sole and exclusive patronage of reason?

By "marriages of reason" is generally understood marriages concluded under the following conditions, varying in form according to the position of the contracting parties, but exactly the same in principle: equality of fortune, position, and social relations. Any infraction of the rule is certain ruin.

Marriage, for these algebrists of the human heart, is an equation whose terms must be on both sides identical. Unfortunately, the unknown quantity thence resulting, often upsets their wisest and wariest calculations. How can we expect it to be otherwise, when we remember the means employed to make sure of the equilibrium which is declared indispensable between the two belligerents? For the parties, who are to become man and wife, begin by making mutual war.

The strategy of the matrimonial campaign is this:—A young man, getting on for thirty, tired of a single life, without parents, or expecting soon to lose them, exercising a profession whose seriousness is more suited to a family man than to a bachelor, or possessing a handsome competency of which a wife alone can do the honours—this young man desires to marry. In his more or less extended circle of acquaintance, he does not know a single girl whose outward charms have made much impression on him, or whose fortune is large enough to tempt him; nevertheless, he wishes to get married. He confides his intentions to two or three friends. Oh! mon Dieu, he will not be over-particular. Provided the young lady belong to a well-con-

sidered family, in a social position equal or superior to his own; provided that a similar concordance exist between their fortunes, and finally, if possible, that the person herself be not altogether repulsive, he will require nothing more. Be she tall or short, fat or lean, fair or dark, well-educated or ignorant, gentle or cross-grained, healthy or sickly, it is all one to him. Equality of fortune and position are the two grand items; all the rest are accessories.

The friends, then, are on the look-out; they soon discover a score of marriageable girls. The postulant has no other difficulty than that of making his selection. A fête, a ball, a call, a dinner, a simple meeting brought about by a third party, bring the two enemies face to face. The word "enemies" is not employed by chance.

When two armies, or two diplomatists, have met, what is their first, their only care? Of course, to obtain the best possible conditions at the expense of the adverse party. And what means do they employ to accomplish that end? They conceal their forces and their lowest terms, which they only allow to appear when all is over. In all the matrimonial negotiations whence marriages of reason result, matters are conducted exactly as they are by diplomatists. Both of them, suitor and maid, paint—not, perhaps, their faces, although the least said about that the better; but their looks, their words, their attitude, endeavouring to adorn themselves with moral and physical advantages, of which closer intimacy will show that they are utterly devoid.

What does it signify? A good opportunity offers itself; no time is to be lost in striking the bargain. Nobody can live on love and spring water. Money in the funds, farms in Normandy, vineyards in the Côte d'Or, a notary's office with plenty of clients, are precious things of the very first importance. If, by-the-by, the house becomes unbearable, the fortune with its little additions can be divided into two equal shares, and all will go on smoothly again.

The young couple, then, are brought together; the combat is about to begin; for an hour or two, the suitor, without coming forward or compromising himself, is able to scrutinise with his eyes the person proposed to him as his wife. If the eyes are satisfied—and little caution is to be expected in an eye ready to be pleased—it is possible, amidst the confusion of a crowd, by means of a polka, to obtain the favour of a few minutes' tête-à-tête.

All goes well. The young man, enamoured with his partner's charms, returns to the common friend, and says, "I have no objection to conclude the match. But I must have two hundred thousand francs; you know that sum is indispensable."

"Yes, my dear fellow; but no one is compelled to perform impossibilities. We can give only a hundred and fifty thousand."

"Show me, then, another pearl out of your stock of jewellery."

"Easy enough. Did you remark, sitting by the side of your rejected fair one, a very dark-complexioned girl?"

"Yes; and the least in the world awry."

"She has two hundred and fifty thousand francs!"

"If she will accept me, the business is settled."

Fresh presentation, fresh dissimulation. During a month, three times a week, for two hours at a sitting, the lover pays his respects to his affianced bride. On the day when, hand in hand, they swear before God and man to take each other for husband and wife, they have been twenty-four hours in each other's company, and that in the presence of witnesses.

Unhappy creatures! They have not had the time even to think of what they are doing. For a month their thoughts have been occupied with everything excepting marriage. The young man has been meditating solely how he will employ the dowry; the young lady has been considering the items of her "corbeille" or wedding presents. But if a dowry and a corbeille are things not to be despised, it is difficult to believe that they alone constitute the whole of marriage. And yet, that is what is called a marriage of reason!

"All the proprieties have been observed," stupidly say their worldly acquaintances. "They are perfectly assorted! Ah! they will make a happy couple!"

Wait a bit, good people. When the funds have dropped, and the corbeille is worn out, you will see if the proprieties, all the proprieties, have been observed—if the couple be so admirably matched.

Fatigued with the constraint which they had imposed on themselves at the outset (a constraint observed by all polite strangers who happen to be thrown together by chance), they feel that they can no longer support the dissimulation of their real characters; and having no further appearances to keep up—the one for the sake of the dowry, the other for the corbeille—they reveal their true selves with an energy proportionate to the difficulty they had in maintaining the compression. Then, surely, is the time, if ever, to invoke the reason which was so loudly talked of as presiding at the marriage. Then is the time to compliment them on their prudence, and their respect for propriety. What a delightful household, what an admirably-assorted couple, have sprung up out of this marriage of reason!

Monsieur, who was a little saint, a docile slave, while fingering the cash, suddenly feels his despotic instincts struggling in his bosom stronger than ever. He assumes the tone of a master towards the person one look from whom, so lately, either overclouded or irradiated his forehead, and the tyrant bickers at the slightest outlay made by the woman for whose corbeille nothing was fine enough, nothing dear enough.

And the young wife? Do you, by chance, imagine that she does not perform her part in this new modulation of the conjugal duet? She, so white, so gentle, so angelical, so smiling beneath her wreath of orange-flowers, has become yellow, dry, waspish, angular. Mounted on her pedestal of two hundred and fifty thou-

sand francs, she holds that she purchased, not a brutal despot, but a complaisant follower. Madame, to go to a charity-sermon, exacts the support of monsieur's arm, whose tendencies lie entirely turf-wards. At night, the one is attracted to a ball, while the other cannot abstain from his club. So that the marriage of reason (whose sweets have lasted about as long as spring-tide flowers) ends, ninety times out of a hundred, in a separation—not of hearts; for that organ has never been consulted, and had never formed part of the portion on either side. And note well that this is a match made under avowable circumstances; there are others that may be stigmatised as shameful, although placed under the patronage of reason. Take one as a sample of the rest.

It was a young notary. The son of artisans in easy circumstances, he dreamt, as the summit of grandeur, of nothing less than an office in a chef-lieu d'arrondissement, a town honoured by the residence of a sous-préfet. Three hundred a year (seven or eight thousand francs), after twenty years' labour, was all his ambition; and everything promised that he would obtain his object.

He had been in business three years, and half the cost of his place was already paid. (Notaries' "studies" are purchased, like commissions in the British army.) As a not ill-looking fellow, and esteemed in the exercise of his legal functions, he might, according to local custom, aspire to a dowry of fifty thousand francs, with twice as much in expectation. He was, in short, the man who had the best opportunities in the neighbourhood for making what is called a marriage of reason without doing violence to his own inclinations. He could pick and choose among lots of girls possessing all the qualifications required in that class of society; namely, a decent fortune, sufficient education to know that there is no railway between Dover and Calais, enough piano-playing to scratch off a polka, taste enough to avoid wearing a green hat with a blue dress, a knowledge of pickling and preserving, the capability to shear wool off an egg-shell, and the sense (in spite of a love of finery) to prefer an acre of land to a cashmere shawl, with the habit of attending church merely for decorum's sake. In other respects, brought up in the most complete submissiveness, purity, and ignorance. Assuredly, for matrimonial speculators, it was the beau ideal of a chance.

Well—would you believe it?—this smart little notary, who, as the saying is, had only to stoop to gather the fairest flower, cast his eyes on a girl older than himself, scarcely three feet high, idiotic, subject to St. Vitus's dance, and superlatively hysterical. True, she was an only child; and nobody, except the notaries of the neighbourhood, could state the exact figure of the paternal fortune. The most moderate estimate put it at fifteen hundred thousand francs. That was the bait.

After many a cautious feeler to ascertain whether he were likely to suit, the bold young notary was admitted into the fortress. The father who, for form's sake, had made some slight resistance, decided at length to conclude an alliance which, at one stroke, had the double advantage of ridding him of a heavy burden, and of giving him a son-in-law capable of managing his numerous affairs.

For the consideration of five hundred thousand francs, in the shape of dowry, the notary, who sold his office, swore at the altar to ensure the happiness of a woman whom he could not look at without disgust, and so contracted a marriage which his fellow-townsmen qualified, not indeed as a marriage of reason—the term did not express sufficient approval—but as a marriage "de haute raison," of high reason!

What admirable devotion! Was it not a sacrifice of self to link himself for life to so abject a creature, and to devote his abilities and acquirements to the service of his opulent father-in-law? True, the five hundred thousand francs were regarded as a sop of consolation—no; not that—as the reward of his cleverness.

That match gave rise to heaps of envy. But although the story is historical, it finishes exactly like a tale. For events—which is a pity—sometimes take the liberty of occurring as novel-writers would make them occur. There was a final chastisement. After two years' married life, the idiotic dwarf, who gained strength by accidents that kill ordinary women, buried for good and all her hard-working and expectant husband, who died therefore without touching the fortune for which he had sold himself body and soul. Providence does not seem to favour marriages of such excessively high reason.

Keeping to the strict sense of the words, the union termed a marriage of inclination would be one in which reason is set aside, despised, trodden under foot. Nay, the word "inclination" is too timid and gentle to express the meaning of those who apply it to this kind of marriage. They would imply blind passion; something worse, perhaps. They will be greatly astonished at being told: "Your marriage of reason is an act of folly, since you have converted it into a commercial contract. Its true name is a money-match. No one denies that the voice of reason ought to be invoked, and listened to, in concluding a marriage; but reason, really worthy of the name, requires other conditions besides the equalities laid down as bases. Ruminate La Bruyère's skit. 'If you choose to commit a folly, and marry for a passing whim, you will espouse Mélite, who is young, pretty, well-conducted, economical, whom you love, and who loves you, who has a smaller fortune than Ægine, whom they want you to marry, and who, with a rich dower, will bring you a rich disposition to spend it, and all your worldly goods besides.'"

In fact, what will it profit me to marry a woman who is more or less rich, if, for many grave and inevitable reasons, I cannot live happily with her? Far better to remain poor and single; I shall at least preserve that inestimable treasure commonly called liberty. I shall not

then be obliged, in order to regain a small fraction of it, to give the lie to all my engagements, and to violate my most sacred vows. Looking marriage bravely in the face, to give a definition of it, we need not hesitate to say that matrimony ought to be an improvement in the condition of both the parties.

If marriage ought to be an amelioration, what are the requisites for augmenting the well-being of a man and a woman isolated in celibacy? In the first place, the companion chosen for life, ought to enjoy perfect health. Men or women who, from interested motives, take to themselves ailing or decrepid partners, commit an act which, if general, would entail the degradation of future generations. Is *that* reasonable? Is it even natural?

After health, come character and disposition, which greatly depend on education, habit, and the social medium in which the early years of life have been spent. It is certain that a girl brought up as a recluse, in the practice of almost monastic habits, will be ill disposed for an abrupt transition from her accustomed solitude to the activity of a large industrial enterprise. In like manner, the girl who has acquired a taste for travelling, will with difficulty yield to the exigencies of a sedentary life. There ought therefore at least to be some analogy between the past and the future, to prevent the suddenness of the contrast from turning out a stumbling-stone for the future spouses. As to the money question, no one says that it ought to be neglected; but certainly it ought to yield the precedence to physical and moral considerations.

Swedenborg has discoursed at length on the mysterious and almost invincible predestination of human attachments. Every soul, he asserts, and everybody, living and suffering in this valley of tears, has a sister or a brother, to which the laws of physical and moral attraction are constantly tending to unite it. In proof whereof he cites the sudden and inexplicable sympathy which breaks out, at first sight, between two persons who did not even suspect each other's existence.

No one will deny that, in married life, one ought to try to love the woman one marries. Well; before our heart is opened to her, our eyes have been already smitten. By what? There's the mystery! Evidently beauty is a powerful stimulant of love; but do we not daily behold men captivated by women whom the majority of their male friends consider plain? This fascination is therefore owing to some secret cause which we obey without knowing what it is—a mysterious attraction which cannot lead us astray, if we will only follow it. Inclination is the daughter of sight; she is the offspring of an innate sympathy, inexplicable perhaps, but certainly indisputable. Consequently, the man who marries the woman who pleases him, is nearer to the truth than he who beholds his future bride only through the deceptive prism of her cash-box.

When a man is charmed by a woman, and excites in her a reciprocal feeling, there are a thousand ways which the strictest morality cannot blame, and which prudery only would dare to condemn, of studying and becoming acquainted with the temper and habits of that woman. If, after due inquiry, the inclination still subsists, it is clear that there is compatibility of temper between them. In this respect, at any rate, the marriage of fools has an advantage over the marriage of sages. As to pecuniary considerations, it is needless to mention them at this point of the argument. The man who is reasonable enough not to marry a wife until he has previously loved and studied her, will be perfectly capable of deciding a question in which his own personal interest is concerned

From all which, M. Thévenin concludes that a marriage of reason is an act of folly which can only turn out well by great good luck; whilst a marriage of inclination is the only reasonable one, when the future couple have prudence enough to put between the birth of their inclination and the conclusion of their union an interval long enough to assure them that their affection is likely to resist time and its perfidious revelations.

SPIRITS ON THEIR LAST LEGS.

When rogues fall out, says the proverb, honest men come by their due. So, when tricksters begin to abuse each other, the poor dupes they have gulled come to their senses.

This is the crisis at which spiritualism has arrived. Mr. Home, who for a long time held undisputed possession of the spiritual field, has lately stigmatised the Davenports as "unmitigated humbugs," and the friends of the Davenports retort, through the medium of the Spiritual Times (price twopence weekly, advertisements two shillings a line), that Mr. Home is so notoriously jealous of every medium but himself, that he is utterly disqualified for passing a judgment upon any medium whatever, or himself into the bargain. Mr. Home has worked his entertainment out; the Brothers Davenport have been exposed, and denounced even by Mr. Home himself, and their mysteries have been left in the hands of a few obscure ignorant men and women, who find séance-holding more profitable, more pleasant, and much easier work, than the shoemaking, or bonnet-building, which is their proper vocation. In fact, spirit-rapping has come down to the level of fortune-telling, with this difference, that the rappers have a weekly organ through which to communicate their names and addresses to the public; while the old woman with the dirty pack of cards is obliged to prowl about areas, or trust to her private and confidential connexion with the servant-maids.

A little while ago the spirits demanded half a sovereign at the doors; now they are willing to perform first and make the collection afterwards, "leaving it entirely to you," and thankfully receiving the smallest donations. This is even a degree lower than the practice of the

gentleman who gave an exhibition of rope-tying on Epsom Downs on the Derby Day, but who declined to begin until we had "chucked in another fourpence to make up two bob." I am bound to say, however, that the performance was worth the money. The fellow tied and untied himself with as much security, ease, and celerity, as I ever saw exhibited by the Davenports. And he did it all in the sight of his audience, without hiding himself in a cabinet, or going behind a screen.

The readers of this journal have heard a good deal about the spirits in their over-proof condition at the Hanover-square and other select rooms. Let me now give them a taste of the spirits, under-proof and very much reduced, in dirty little parlours in Holloway, and dingy back shops in the neighbourhood of Holborn.

I received an invitation to visit two celebrated mediums, who stood towards each other in the earthly relation of man and wife. I set out about two o'clock on a bright summer's afternoon, in company of a distinguished friend, for a certain rendezvous in the Kentish-town-road. We had not far to go, but the elaborate simplification of the numbers of the Kentish-town-road by the Board of Works (that body being then engaged in ranging the even numbers on one side of the way and the odd numbers on the other), rendered the finding of the rendezvous a matter of considerable difficulty. The lady at the stay-shop assured us that Mr. Ferguson did not lodge there; but she would be most happy to guide us to where he did lodge, if in her power. "What was Mr. Ferguson?" How were we to answer? How were we to describe the gentleman? As a medium, or as a dealer in spirits? Medium conveyed nothing to the staymaking mind, and the mention of spirits suggested the public-house. How many unlicensed houses in the Kentish-town-road we called at, inquiring for spirits, I don't know; but before we discovered the lodgement of Mr. Ferguson (at a chemist's), we had become objects of much wonder and some suspicion to the road generally.

At last Mr. Ferguson did lodge here. We found him in the chemist's back parlour, surrounded by the implements of amateur photography, and an odour of collodion. He was not the medium himself; but the medium was a friend of his, and he would be happy to take us to his house, which was in Holloway. Before leading the way, Mr. Ferguson took us in hand like so many photographic plates, and prepared us for receiving impressions. He and his friend the medium had once been materialists; but circumstances had occurred at a table one evening, which had served to convince them that there was more in heaven and earth than was dreamt of in their philosophy. Since then, Mr. Ferguson had seen wonderful manifestations from the spirit-world, and he had no doubt that we would see wonderful things that day, if we approached the subject in a candid spirit. With this exhortation we started for Holloway.

We had trusted implicitly to the topographical knowledge of our guide, the amateur photographer, but we found, at Holloway, that we had been leaning upon a broken reed. All he could do was to point to a dead wall, and say: "*My* belief is, that if we could go through this wall we should come upon the house directly." This was so obviously the weak-minded excuse of a fatuously foolish person, that it drew forth from us a muttered trio of maledictions upon our guide's head. In case this should meet his eye, I will not say what names we called him; but they were not complimentary.

There was nothing for it but to make inquiries, which, as our guide did not even know the name of the street in which the medium lived, was like taking an observation at sea in a pitch-dark night. As the medium and his wife are in the habit of advertising themselves every week in the Spiritual Times, I shall not betray any confidence if I mention that their name is Wallace. We asked for Wallace, spiritualists, at the police station. They were, to their honour be it said, not known to the police. We asked at public-houses, and, equally to their credit, they were not known there. At length we were informed that Mr. Wallace lived at number fourteen in a certain street. We called there, and, in answer to our summons, there came to the door a gentleman in high-lows and corduroys, with a wisp of bird's-eye round his neck: no coat or waistcoat, and jury braces rigged with twine. He was wiping his mouth with the back of his hand, which indicated that we had disturbed him at dinner. Was he Mr. Wallace? He was. Was he in the spiritual line? But it was needless to ask. Mr. Wallace, of number fourteen, was obviously a philosopher of the peripatetic order, devoting himself to fish or vegetables, according to the season. I fancy that when Mr. Wallace, of number fourteen, saw four individuals standing on his door-step, he was seized with a qualm of conscience about beating his donkey, and had a terrible thought of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. We were almost in despair, when, on turning into the next street, we espied the postman. Here was a chance at length—our last and only chance.

"Did he know a Mr. Wallace living thereabouts?"

"Wallace—Wallace." This in a thoughtful and recollecting manner.

We assisted the postman's mental process by mentioning Mr. Wallace's profession—spiritualism. The word brought the scattered rays of the postal intelligence into focus.

"Oh yes; there was a Mr. Wallace living in the next street, at number forty-seven; to be sure, he *was* connected with religion, and received a great many letters."

I made a small bet that this was not the Wallace we were in search of—and lost.

The house was semi-detached, and the walls, which had been last plastered probably about forty years ago, were dirt-begrimed and cracked.

The neglected piece of ground in front should have been overrun with grass, but none grew there. The door stood in a gloomy little corner at the side, and close by there grew a strange-looking tree, suggestive of upas and deadly nightshade.

Mr. Ferguson, very fussy and very anxious, giving our mental plates another sensitive bath as he leads the way, ushers us into a dingy little parlour, the prominent articles in which are two round tables, one large and the other small, the latter with one leg and three feet. Mr. Ferguson tells us amazing stories about the large table. How, on several occasions, it was by spiritual agency lifted up nearly to the ceiling, and how he, Mr. F., got on the top of it, and could not bring it to the ground. We were introduced to the male medium. He was a tall man with a big bulging forehead, bushy eyebrows, a weak quivering mouth, and a pair of large watery dreamy-looking eyes. He was dressed in a swallow-tailed black coat, and his general appearance indicated the jobbing shoemaker who would preach in the Parks on Sunday afternoon if the police would let him, and who, if he were not permitted to preach, would be sure to find some other way of giving vent to his egotism and his dangerous little bit of learning. He was the kind of man who takes up with Voltaire and Tom Paine—who, under certain other circumstances, would be attracted by the purest Evangelism, by Puseyism, Mormonism, or any other ism—a man whose mind is as soft and impressionable as putty, and whose nerves are as weakly strung as a spider's web. Recognising a remarkably pulpy man of this type, I could give him credit for believing anything. I will candidly admit that he did not give me the idea of a trickster.

There was no sign of preparation about the humble little room, and I was abundantly convinced that there *was* no preparation. We were asked which table we would like to operate upon, the large or the small one. We were quite indifferent, and the choice being left to the medium, he chose the small table. Six of us, including the medium, sat down at it in a circle, and placed our hands on its surface. Thus we sat for fully five minutes, and nothing came of it. The medium said he had never known the spirits so backward. We sat for another five minutes without any result, when suddenly the door opened softly, and the medium's wife stole into the room. She took a seat on a chair near the door at some distance from the table. Mrs. Wallace presented a very striking contrast to her husband. She had a sharp cunning look, with a lively twinkle in her small dark eyes, indicating a strong sense of humour. At last we had a manifestation. The spirits did not rap and the table did not tilt, but the medium's hand began to waggle about in a sort of frenzy. "What was that?" we asked. "Oh, that was a sperrit moving him." "Could he see the spirit?" "Yes, he could see the sperrit." "And what did the spirit indicate?" "The sperrit indicated that he was to write."

Mr. Ferguson here brought forward a sheet of foolscap and a pencil, and the medium prepared to write. But it was a hand with St. Vitus's dance. After much staggering about the paper, the hand succeeded in writing a few words in very irregular characters. The medium said he could not make out every word that the spirit had written, but the purport of the communication was, that *she* was to come to the table. She? There could be no dispute about the person referred to; for there was only one she present. Accordingly, Mrs. Wallace (having, as I noticed, previously wiped her fingers with a handkerchief) came to the table. Still no raps, nor tilts, but presently Mr. Wallace's hand in another fit, moving backward and forward, and apparently sweeping crumbs into my lap. (N.B. I had just assured Mr. Wallace that I had never before assisted at an exhibition of spiritualism in this form.) "What did the agitated hand mean by sweeping imaginary crumbs into my lap?" It meant that Mrs. Wallace was to come and sit by me. "How did he know that?" "The sperrit told him so, and he knew by experience how the sperrit indicated particular things." "Oh," we said. Mrs. Wallace came and sat by me. She wiped her hands again before putting them on the table. Presently the table creaked. That was not sperrits, Mr. Wallace said: it was merely the creaking of the table, and he warned us not to be too ready to accept false signs. Presently a rap of another kind was heard. It was a dull sound like the rap of a knuckle on a solid piece of wood. That was declared to be a sperrit. Mr. Wallace proceeded to address the sperrit in mild and persuasive accents. "Now, friend; if you are ready to communicate with us, you will please to give three raps for 'yes;' and two raps for 'no.' Is it your wish to communicate with us? Give me a hanser." The spirit understood Mr. Wallace's dialect, and gave him a hanser with one rap, then another, and at length, after some delay, a third.

While these raps were being made, I noticed quite distinctly and visibly (without the possibility of making any mistake about the matter) that Mrs. Wallace was vigorously using the muscles of her fingers to move the table. When I had seen her in this way produce several raps, I came to a tacit understanding with her by wiping my fingers with my pocket-handkerchief. She saw me do this, and it was a masonic sign by which she recognised a medium of her own class. By exerting the tips of my fingers on the surface of the table, I found I could produce the raps that were recognised as the communications of spirits. I will explain at once how it is done, so that any one may test the matter for himself. By pushing the tips of your fingers backward and forward you give to the table an imperceptible motion which moves the foot on the floor. It is this slight slip on the floor that sounds through the boards and produces the raps. There was a rapid succession of knocks produced by Mrs. Wallace (not by me),

and then the male medium addressed the spirits thus: "Now, don't all knock at once, but be patient, and speak one at a time; you'll all have your turn." The spirits, thus rebuked, retired all but one, who was very willing to answer questions, but unfortunately always answered wrong. This spirit could not be persuaded to give a plain straightforward answer; but would go gabbling on with any number of knocks when he was required to give only two or three. On trying to bring this spirit under control, I found that the table slipped too readily, and that it was difficult to stop the raps at the required number. The medium tried another modus. Addressing the loquacious spirit, he said, "Will you hanser questions by tipping the table—three tips for yes, and two tips for no." The table tipped three times, signifying that it would hanser the questions. I distinctly saw Mrs. Wallace tip the table by drawing it towards her with her fingers. I stopped her at will; and I noticed that she could only tip the table when it was balanced upon two feet. When she wished to vary the direction in which the table was required to tip, she moved the table round either to the right or the left. The spirits answered readily with the tips; but oddly enough, they were *always* wrong. I never saw guess-work so uniformly a failure.

A more miserable, wretched, stupid, weak-minded imposture, it never has been my fate to see. I think Mrs. Wallace was sensible of her failure to impress us with the tapping, for it seemed in a sort of desperation that she resorted to the hand manifestation. While her hand was dancing St. Vitus's dance, she snuffled and soffed, and appeared to be in a fit. Some one making a funny remark while she was in the midst of this performance, she burst into a laugh in spite of herself, and St. Vitus left her instanter.

For the extraordinary scene that followed, I am in no way responsible. I was not privy to the design, and I was as much astonished and perplexed as the mediums themselves. One of the party asked a question with solemnity and anxiety. Mrs. Wallace, in the usual manner, tipped the table three times, and (this I will grant), with my assistance, sent it spinning into the questioner's lap. Hereupon the gentleman covered his face with his hands, sobbed, howled, kicked over the tables and chairs, seized the medium by the collar, dragged him to the ground, and there rolled over and over with him, apparently in a struggle to the death. All this time—and the gentleman manifested during full five minutes—Mr. Ferguson was adjuring the spirit, by all sorts of sacred names, to "come out of this man." But the spirit did not come out of this man until every article of furniture in the room had been upset, and until Mr. Ferguson's shins had been well kicked, and the male medium nearly strangled. What was the object of this manifestation I don't know, unless it was to add force to the verdict which we unanimously passed upon the performance of "Mr. and Mrs. Wallace, the celebrated mediums," which was, that their so-called spiritualism was an impudent, barefaced imposture, clumsy in the last degree, and audaciously blasphemous. We accompanied this finding with a honorarium of two shillings a head, making in all sixteen shillings. Not a bad afternoon's wage for such work.

That Mrs. Wallace practised the imposture knowing it to be an imposture, I am certain. I am not so sure about her husband. I am inclined to think that he believed in it to some extent; that he was in some measure the dupe of his wife; but that he was not unwilling to practise trickery himself when what he believed to be spiritual influence failed.

I made an appointment to witness a séance conducted by another famous medium; but on arriving at the place of meeting, I encountered my old friends, Mr. and Mrs. Wallace. The other famous medium, it was said, had *reasons* for not keeping the appointment, and had sent Mr. and Mrs. Wallace as substitutes, that a stroke of business might not be lost to the fraternity. This is organisation, I suppose. The second séance with the Wallaces was even more stupid than the first. They could do nothing but tilt the table, and when I asked (mentally) if Mr. Wallace was a humbug, the spirit tilted yes; and again tilted yes when I asked if Mrs. Wallace was not the greater humbug of the two. It occurred to me to inquire how these people could so constantly subject themselves to exposure, and persist in a foolish exhibition which I and others there present had already denounced. I had a full answer to this when I made a motion of leaving without paying. Both mediums stopped in the middle of their conjurations, and looked round at me with an unmistakable demand for money. Which is the root of all evil.

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HALF A MILLION OF MONEY.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "BARBARA'S HISTORY."

CHAPTER XXXV. BRAVO, ANTINOUS!

THE two Pulteneys stayed out, the one to act as judge, the other as timekeeper; and the timekeeper was to give the starting signal by firing a pistol.

In the meanwhile, the eight competitors were ranged side by side, close under the ladies' platform, with the sleeves of their Jerseys rolled up above the elbows, their arms drawn close to their bodies, and their clenched fists pressed against their chests—all lithe and eager-looking, like a pack of greyhounds. Of these, the two tallest and fairest were Saxon Trefalden and Sir Charles Burgoyne. Sir Charles was the handsomer man; but Saxon was a shade the taller, and something more than a shade broader across the shoulders. Well might Miss Hatherton call him the golden-haired Antinous; only that he was Antinous on a grander scale than the famous Antinous of the Capitol—Antinous with herculean possibilities of strength and speed.

With the exception of Lord Castletowers, whose Jersey was of a creamy white, just the tint of his flannel trousers, the young men were each distinguished by the colours of their shirts. Saxon's was striped pink and white; Burgoyne's light blue and white; Vaughan's mauve and white; and so on.

All was ready. The course was clear; the spectators silent; the competitors drawn up, and waiting. Suddenly, the timekeeper threw up his hand, and fired in the air. At the same instant, as if shot from his pistol, the eight runners sprang forward, and the race began.

They had no sooner started than Saxon took the lead, running lightly and steadily, with his head well up, and his curls dancing in the sun. He was obviously putting but little labour into his running, and yet, at the first three or four bounds, he had gained a good ten feet on his companions. Next in order came Castletowers, Vaughan, and Burgoyne, almost level with each other; and close after them, Edward Brandon, whose slightness of make and length of limb enabled him to run tolerably well for a short distance; but whose want of real physique invariably knocked him up at the end of the first three hundred yards. Torrington, Greville, and Pelham Hay brought up the rear. In this order they ran the first round. At the second turn, however, just as they neared the ladies' platform, Castletowers made a rush to the front, and passed Saxon by some three or four feet. At the same instant, Vaughan and Burgoyne perceptibly increased their pace, widening the space between themselves and the four last at every stride.

And now Brandon, who had for some seconds begun to show symptoms of distress, came suddenly to a stand-still; and, being passed by those in the rear, fell, pale and panting, to the earth.

In the mean while, Saxon had in no wise quickened his pace, nor attempted to regain his lead; but kept on at precisely the same rate throughout the whole of the second round. Just as they were beginning the third, however, and at the very point where Castletowers had made his rush, Saxon, without any apparent effort, bounded ahead, and again left his friend some three yards behind.

Torrington, Greville, and Hay now dropped out of the ranks, one by one, and gave up the contest; leaving only Saxon and Castletowers, Vaughan and Burgoyne, in the race. Presently the two latter went down, but were on their feet again in the twinkling of an eye, and flying on as before.

At the fourth round, Castletowers brought himself up abreast with Saxon. At the fifth, Burgoyne gave in, and Vaughan flagged obviously; but Castletowers again dashed forward, and again secured the lead.

A subdued murmur, that broke now and then into a cheer, ran round the course. Every eye was riveted upon the runners. Every head turned as they turned, and was outstretched to follow them. The ladies rose on the platform, and watched them through their glasses. There were only three now—a white shirt, a pink shirt, and a mauve; but white and pink divided the suffrages of the lookers-on, and nobody cared a straw for mauve.

Again the circuit was nearly completed, and they were approaching the stand. The next round would be the sixth and last. The interest of the moment became intense. The murmur swelled again, and became a shout—hats were waved, handkerchiefs fluttered—even Lady Castletowers leaned forward with a glow of real excitement on her face.

On they came—the Earl first, in his white Jersey, pale as marble, breathing in short heavy

gasps, lips quivering, brows closely knitted, keeping up his lead gallantly, but keeping it by dint of sheer pluck and nervous energy. Saxon next—a little flushed, but light of foot and self-possessed as ever, as fresh apparently as when he first started, and capable of running on at the same steady rate for any number of miles that might be set before him. Vaughan last—coming up very heavily, and full twenty yards in the rear.

"Good Heavens!" cried Miss Hatherton, half beside herself with impatience, "how *can* he let Lord Castletowers keep the lead?"

"Because he cannot help it," said Olimpia, scornfully triumphant. She had forgotten that Saxon was her chosen knight, and all her sympathies were with the Earl.

"Absurd! he has but to put out a little more speed and he *must* win. The Earl is nearly . . . There! there! did I not tell you so? Bravo, Antinous!"

They passed the platform; and as they passed, Saxon looked up with an ardent smile, waved his hand to Olimpia, threw up his head like a young war-horse, bounded forward as if the wings were really on his feet, and passed the Earl as easily as a man on horseback passes a man on foot. Till this moment the race, earnest enough for the rest, had been mere play to him. Till this moment he had not attempted to put out his speed, or show what he could do. Now he flashed past the astonished spectators like a meteor. His feet seemed scarcely to touch the turf, his body seemed as if borne upon the air. A great roar of admiration burst from the crowd; and in the midst of the roar, before Lord Castletowers had got over a third of the distance, Saxon had made the sixth round, and passed the winning-post by several feet.

"Won by a hundred and eighty yards," said Pulteney, timekeeper. "Last round thirty-one seconds and a half. By Jove, Sir, though I've seen it myself, I can scarcely believe it!"

Saxon laughed joyously.

"I could have done it almost as easily," said he, "if it had been up-hill all the way."

And what did Olimpia Colonna say to her chosen knight, when he received the prize from her hands, only to lay it the next moment at her feet? Doubtless she remembered in good time that Saxon *was* her chosen knight, and forgot how disloyally her sympathies had strayed from him in the race. Doubtless her greeting had in it something poisonously sweet, subtle, intoxicating—to judge, at least, by the light in his face, as he bowed and turned away.

CHAPTER XXXVI. ELTON HOUSE, KENSINGTON.

Mr. Abel Keckwitch, with William Trefalden's private address in his pocket-book, felt much as Adrian the Fourth may have felt with haughty Barbarossa prostrate at his feet. He took it for granted that there was some dark secret at the bottom of his master's daily life. He knew quite well that a practical man like William Trefalden would never take the trouble to surround himself with mystery unless he had something to hide, and to that something Abel Keckwitch believed he now possessed the key. It never occurred to him that William Trefalden might possibly object to let such loquacious stones as copying clerks prate of his whereabouts, for other than criminal reasons. If such an idea had been suggested to him, he would have laughed it to scorn. So, to do him justice, would Mr. Kidd. Both the detective and the lawyer's clerk were too familiar with the dark side of human nature to believe for a moment that systematic mystery meant anything less than undiscovered crime.

So Abel Keckwitch took his master's address home with him, fairly written out in Mr. Nicodemus Kidd's clear business hand, and exulted therein. He was in no haste to act upon the information folded up in that little slip of paper. It was not in his nature to be in haste about anything, least of all about so sweet a dish as revenge. It must be prepared slowly, tasted a morsel at a time, and made to last as long as possible. Above all, it must be carefully considered beforehand from every point of view, and be spoiled by no blunder at starting. So he copied the address into his common-place book, committed it to memory, pondered over it, gloated over it, and fed his imagination on it for days before he proceeded to take any fresh steps in the matter.

"ELTON HOUSE, KENSINGTON."

Such was the address given to him by Mr. Nicodemus Kidd. "Elton House, Kensington;" not a word more—not a word less. It was an address that told nothing—suggested nothing. "Elton Villa" would have bespoken a neat, stuccoed anachronism in the Græco-Gothic style; "Elton Lodge," a prim modern residence, with gardens, gates, and a carriage-drive; "Elton Cottage," an unassuming little place, shrinking back from the high road, in a screen of lilacs and laburnums; but "Elton House" represented none of these to the mind's eye. "Elton House" might be ancient or modern, large or small, a cockney palace, or a relic of the old court days. There was nothing in its name to assist conjecture in any way. Thus, again, the very suburb was perplexing. Of all districts round about London, there is none so diverse in its characteristics as Kensington—none so old in part, so new in part; so stately here, so squalid there; so of the country countrified in one direction, so of the town towny in another. Elton House might partake of any of these conditions for aught that one could gather from its name.

In short, Mr. Abel Keckwitch turned the address over in his mind much as some people turn their letters over, stimulating their curiosity instead of gratifying it, and spelling out the motto on the seal, instead of breaking it.

At length he resolved to go over to Kensington and reconnoitre the ground. Having come to this determination one Saturday afternoon

(on which day, when practicable, Mr. Trefalden dismissed his clerks at five o'clock), Abel Keckwitch pushed forward with his work; closed the office precisely as St. Dunstan's clock was striking; and, instead of trudging, as usual, direct to Pentonville, turned his face westward, and hailed the first Hammersmith omnibus that came by.

It was a lovely afternoon; warm, sunny, summerlike. Mr. Trefalden's head clerk knew that the Park trees were in all the beauty of their early leafage, and that the air beyond Charing-Cross would be delicious; and he was sorely tempted to take a seat on the roof. But prudence prevailed. To risk observation would be to imperil the very end for which he was working; so, with a sigh, he gave up the air and the sunshine, and took an inside place next the door.

The omnibus soon filled, and, once closely packed, rattled merrily on, till it drew up for the customary five minutes' rest at the White Horse Cellar. Then, of course, came the well-known newsvendor with the evening papers; and the traditionary old lady who has always been waiting for the last three-quarters of an hour; and the conductor's vain appeal to the gallantry of gentlemen who will *not* go outside to oblige a lady—would prefer, in fact, to see a dozen ladies boiled first.

This interlude played out, the omnibus rattled on again to the corner of Sloane-street, where several passengers alighted; and thence proceeded at a sober, leisurely rate along the Kensington-road, with the green, broad Park lying all along to the right, and row after row of stately terraces to the left.

"Put me down, conductor," said Mr. Keckwitch, "at the first turning beyond Elton House."

He had weighed every word of this apparently simple sentence, and purposely waited till the omnibus was less crowded, before delivering it. He knew that the Kensington-road, taken from the point where Knightsbridge is supposed to end, up to that other point where Hammersmith is supposed to begin, covers a fair three miles of ground; and he wanted to be set down as near as possible to the spot of which he was in search. But then it was essential that he should not seem to be looking for Elton House, or going to Elton House, or inquiring about Elton House in any way; so he worded his little speech with an ingenuity that was quite masterly as far as it went.

"Elton House, sir?" said the conductor. "Don't know it. What's the name of the street?"

Mr. Keckwitch took a letter from his pocket, and affected to look for the address.

"Ah!" he replied, refolding it with a disappointed air, "that I cannot tell you. My directions only say, 'the first turning beyond Elton House.' I am a stranger to this part of London, myself."

The conductor scratched his ear, looked puzzled, and applied to the driver.

"'Arry," said he. "Know Elton House?"

"Elton House?" repeated the driver. "Can't say I do."

"I think I have heard the name," observed a young man on the box.

"I'm sure I've seen it somewhere," said another on the roof.

And this was all the information to be had on the subject.

Mr. Keckwitch's ingenious artifice had failed. Elton House was evidently not to be found without inquiry—therefore inquiry must be made. It was annoying, but there was no help for it. Just as he had made up his mind to this alternative, the omnibus reached Kensington-gate, and the conductor put the same question to the toll-taker that he had put to the driver.

"Davy—know Elton House?"

The toll-taker—a shaggy fellow, with a fur cap on his head and a straw in his mouth—pointed with his thumb over his shoulder, and replied,

"Somewhere down by Slade's-lane, beyond the westry."

On hearing which, Mr. Keckwitch's countenance brightened, and he requested to be set down at Slade's-lane, wherever that might be.

Slade's-lane proved to be a narrow, winding, irregular by-street, leading out from the high road, and opening at the further end upon fields and market-gardens. There were houses on only one side; and on the other, high walls, with tree-tops peeping over, and here and there a side-door.

The dwellings in Slade's-lane were of different degrees of smallness; scarcely two of the same height; and all approached by little slips of front garden, more or less cultivated. There were lodgings to let, evidences of humble trades, and children playing about the gardens and door-steps of most of them. Altogether, a more unlikely spot for William Trefalden to reside in could scarcely have been selected.

Having alighted from the omnibus at the top of this street, Mr. Keckwitch, after a hurried glance to left and right, chose the wall side, and walked very composedly along, taking rapid note of each door that he passed, but looking as stolid and unobservant as possible.

The side-doors were mostly painted of a dull green, with white numerals, and were evidently mere garden entrances to houses facing in an opposite direction.

All at once, just at that point where the lane made a sudden bend to the right and turned off towards the market gardens, Mr. Keckwitch found himself under the shadow of a wall considerably higher than the rest, and close against a gateway flanked by a couple of stone pillars. This gate occupied exactly the corner where the road turned, so that it blunted the angle, as it were, and commanded the lane in both directions. It was a wooden gate—old, ponderous, and studded with iron bosses, just wide enough, apparently, for a carriage to drive through, and many feet higher than it was wide.

In it was a small wicket door. The stone pillars were time-stained and battered, and looked as if they might have stood there since the days when William of Orange brought his Dutch court to Kensington. In one of them was a plain brass bell-handle. On both were painted, in faded and half illegible letters, the words, "Elton House."

THE BACHELORS' STRIKE.

To render modern French marriages what they ought to be—marriages of inclination, instead of hard-bargained money matches*—M. Thévenin proposes a no less sweeping measure than the abolition of the marriage-portion.

He allows that the importance of a dowry is not a matter of to-day. We know the number of camels, oxen, sheep, and servants, which Jacob received as Rebecca's portion. The dowry, therefore, is no new institution; but its antique origin, according to our author, adds nothing to its moral value. No man with a proper sense of his own dignity, can allow it to reckon amongst the considerations which determine his marrying. The male sex, who assume to take the lead, would sink wonderfully in the good opinion entertained of them by the weaker sex, if ladies only reflected seriously on the disreputable side of mercantile marriages.

Remembering the profound respect for money in which we are trained by society, what deference can a woman have for a husband who derives his own position and supremacy solely from the dowry she brings him? Wealthy heiresses, full of pretensions justified by universal prejudice, are in general wantonly capricious and insupportable as wives. The wise man, therefore, will shout from the house-tops, "It is shameful to sell your independence and dignity, to risk your happiness and honour, for a money payment, however handsome. Marry to be happy, and not to be rich. If you can combine riches with happiness, there is no harm done; it is so much the better. But never forget the proverb, 'A contented mind is far before wealth.' Put no faith in opulent couples who jingle their money to stifle their remorse; enjoy yourself as well as you can, until it please Providence to send you an income; but never, never, buy it at the expense of tranquillity, happiness, dignity, and conscience.

"Some time ago, they played at the Gymnase a piece called 'Un beau Mariage,' 'A capital Match,' by Emile Augier. Try to see it or to read it. You will there behold the galley-slave's life led by an honest young fellow, whose only crime was believing in the generosity of a great lady whose richly-portioned daughter he had married. At the fourth or fifth act, the much-despised husband has acquired, by his talent, a high position. The noble mother-in-law then runs after him, and reads her recantation. It is a sad reality. Moral marriage should never be a speculation."

It is wonderful that those who most stand up for the dowry, do not remark that it is the principal if not the only cause of the diminution of marriages. At the present day, luxury has made such strides, that many people—and they deserve no pity for their folly—prefer superfluities to necessaries. Consequently, many an heiress, who was considered rich some years ago, is now despised by speculators as virtually portionless. The idea is perfectly logical. If the young lady, by her luxurious tastes, her expensive habits, threaten to absorb the interest of her portion, what benefit will the husband derive from the capital on which he had reckoned to better his position?

In this state of things, a wife is a burden instead of a helpmate. How, in fact, is it to be expected that a girl brought up in silk and lace should make a good housekeeper, a frugal companion, a profitable partner? Her coquettish instincts—stupidly developed by her parents, who considered them a means of establishing her and relieving themselves—cause her to behold in marriage nothing more than an easy method of exchanging lace for feathers, and flowers for diamonds. Their education is so null, not to say worse, that wealthy women do not even suspect that marriage may convert them into mothers of families, and that serious duties are incumbent on them. They only see an opportunity of seizing the liberty after which they sigh, of satisfying their whims, in defiance of a master-slave, who is liberally paid if they vouchsafe him a smile, and overpaid if they allow him to share their extravagances. As matters go at present, portioned marriage is a luxury which none but opulent financiers dare indulge in. Many a little citizen's daughter, with a dowry of a hundred thousand francs, assumes, as a thing of course, the right of spending ten thousand francs a year.

One would say, to see the manner in which Paris girls are brought up now-o'-days, that they were all either millionnaires, or destined for the seraglio. "Housewife, or courtisane," said Proudhon, coarsely, "there is no possible medium." What are they taught in their boarding-schools? Unhappily, it is only a traditional pleasantry to suppose that they learn to make pickles and preserves. They are taught to bedizen themselves, to claw the piano in deplorable style, to sit a horse like a monkey on a camel's back. They cannot even embroider, like the ancient châtelaines, who, during the Crusades, made tapestry which is now the delight of modern antiquaries. For their mother's fête-day, they buy a ready-worked something, of which they fill in the ground. They murder one of Strauss's waltzes, if they can manage to read the notes; but they don't know the A B C of the inside of a house. Puppets of parade, they would exhaust the sands of Pactolus in ruinous fancies and futile caprices; and yet these damsels are astonished if the men are anxious about the amount of their dowry. M.

* See MODERN FRENCH MARRIAGES, page 42 of the present volume.

Thévenin declares that he had rather turn fakir, and pass his whole life in contemplation, than espouse one of these empty, stupid, proud, and pretentious women, who believe themselves musicians because they can get through a polka, distinguished because they are draped with a cashmere, and well-born because they don't know the price of butter!

Who would believe that, in this respect, the French ought to take example by the people reputed the most mercantile on the face of the earth? The English, those pitiless dealers in Bibles, cotton, and opium! The English, whom we (the French) justly regard so attached to material interests; these English strip off their usual character when the choice of a companion is in question. A clever writer (M. Perdonnet), while sketching George Stephenson's biography, observes: "Many people will consider that he fell in love in a perilous, uncalculating, very bold, and very rash way. In fact, he was smitten by two bright eyes which did not possess a single penny."

"This is a crime with us," is M. Thévenin's comment. "Love, in France, as Benjamin Constant has said, is no more than a juxtaposition; and one of the causes of England's superiority over France, is that, with our neighbours, marriage is considered as a happy and agreeable association destined to soften, by sharing them, the burdens of life. With us, on the contrary, it is a cash affair. Marriages of inclination are so superior to money matches, that it would be puerile to insist upon the point. Every man who has the sentiment of individuality, understands it thoroughly. A man and a woman united by love are millionnaires without knowing it; they have the strength and the riches of the heart."

The Abbé Bautain has written, in his Mariage du Jour, "For a man of right feeling, it must always be a shame and a self-reproach to owe his elevation and his existence to having caught the affections of a wealthy girl." It is the dowry, therefore, which is the grand stumbling-stone of matrimony. Far from being the principal consideration, it should be held as an accessory, to be kept quite in the background; and to be obliged to insist on so evident a fact, is the severest criticism it is possible to inflict. If the heart is not the first and only thing to be consulted in matrimony, let us have the courage to say so, and to call by some name other than "marriage" commercial associations regulated by debit and credit. That a woman possesses a respectable cash-box, is no reason for turning one's back on her; but the cash-box should never be admitted as an argument in her favour: especially as "women with portions are mostly spendthrifts, while portionless women are given to saving."

Touching the matrimonial dispositions consequent on this state of things, and at present current in the capital of France, M. Edmond About humorously relates what a country friend, whom we will call M. Vigneron, saw and heard during a recent visit to the metropolis. This friend is a plain and simple family man, who had lived in Paris during his youth, but who now goes to bed with the cocks and hens, is fully occupied from morning till night, and sleeps soundly from night till morning. He is a great admirer of the fair sex, and an in-door Don Quixote to redress their wrongs. He is indignant when he sees a good-hearted girl playing wallflower at a provincial ball, and is disgusted that old maids should have been left unmarried because they were not rich enough to buy husbands. Yet this philanthropist returned rejoicing in the wonderful news of the Bachelors' Strike. The Parisiens have resolved that, at no price whatever, will they contract matrimony with the Parisiennes!

The conspiracy assumed its now formidable proportions at the close of a ball given by his chum and college friend, Léon S. The evening, without exaggeration, had been delightful, for a ball at the close of the season. Vigneron counted more than forty really pretty women, married or single; and it is not very easy to distinguish them, for they all wear the same style of dress, and talk in the same way, as near as may be. You have nothing but the diamonds to go by. But many dames in good society leave their diamonds at home in the month of May. The young men were very brisk and active; they had not that foundered look which you remark in them at the finish of the carnival. Spring-time had freshened up their spirits, exactly as it was freshening the sap in the trees.

With one or two exceptions, all the guests remained till morning, and their appetite exceeded the stock of provisions laid in by the maître d'hôtel. The public had to be divided into three separate batches, while they sent out to wake up the nearest restaurant. Vigneron made one of the final series, together with his entertainer, Léon, and nine or ten intrepid dancers, who cut and came again with equal vigour. As for himself, his appetite is rustic, even when he happens to be in Paris; whether he sleep, or whether he wake, it goes to bed at eight o'clock, and all the cannon of the Invalides would not rouse it. He remained, nevertheless, at Léon's entreaties, being the only friend of his youth he now has left. He had seven or eight, equally intimate, when he (Léon) married in 1850. Madame sent them about their business, one after the other; this one because his cravat was badly tied, another because he was not sufficiently pious, a third because he had married a too unpretending wife, and a fourth because he did not like Gounod's music. A Parisien chooses his friends himself; but his wife revises the list, striking them out sometimes to the very last.

When the third series had sweetened their coffee and lighted their cigars, the conversation grew animated, as will happen after plenty of champagne. Vigneron, who had taken nothing but a cup of tea, contributed his share by some profound reflections on the secret harmonies which connect the institution of marriage with

the season of spring. An immense roar of laughter was his reward; he found that he had unconsciously strayed into a wasps'-nest of hardened and slightly-tipsy bachelors. When a man tumbles into the water, his first movement is to seize a branch. Vigneron snatched at Léon, as one of his own sort, calling on him to testify to the truth.

Léon shook his head, and said, "My good old fellow, you have seen here to-night a tolerable number of pretty girls?"

"Enormous."

"Not so many as that. But there were seven or eight who may pass for handsome, belonging to honourable families, well educated in the best schools or convents, who are not deficient either in health, intellect, or grace, and yet who, in spite of those advantages, have been dragged through all the ball-rooms of Paris without finding a man to marry them!"

"What!" exclaimed Vigneron. "Has human avarice made such awful progress as that? Are we fallen so low that, for want of a little cash——"

"Stop! You are going to waste your breath on a fine bit of declamation. The vile metal, is it not? Simple-minded man of the fields! It is not the vile metal which is wanting. They are handsomely portioned, those turtle-doves! If they were not, things would work smoothly of themselves, and my observation would be common-place and pointless. But they *have* portions, in ready cash. The poorest of the seven has eighty thousand francs paid in at the notary's; the richest has four hundred thousand in "obligations" on the Railway du Nord; the five others may be represented by a sliding scale between those two figures. And yet no man—I mean none of the men whom they could accept—will have anything to do with them or their money. An obstinate refusal is offered to these tempting little personages, and to these dowries which would make provincial suitors open wide both their eyes and their mouth. What do you think of it?"

"I think that you are making game of me, and that your treatment is not what it should be towards a friend who ought to have been in bed six hours ago."

"Ask these gentlemen. They will all tell you, with a single voice, that mine is not the only house in which the same phenomenon is manifested. Everywhere it is the same story; make a tour through the salons of Paris, and you will see. You country-folk, when you see a girl with two hundred thousand francs wearing the crown of St. Catharine, become distrustful, suspect hidden faults, and say to yourselves that there is something underneath the surface. You inquire whether her parents have not figured at the assizes, whether the lady be not epileptic, or have been too familiar with one of her young cousins. In Paris, my lad, nobody is now surprised to meet with single women of five-and-twenty. It is well known that they and their dowry have run up to seed, because the men will have nothing to say to them."

"But why not?"

"Ask these gentlemen! You have before you a whole batch of bachelors. I am married. If I were to plead the cause of celibacy, I should appear to grumble at my lot, and to find fault with somebody, which is far from my intention and thought."

A baby of eighteen, who smoked a big cigar while he coaxed his hopes of a moustache, addressed the company, and coolly said, "Word of honour, my dear monsieur, your innocence surprises me. Daddy Thibautodé, the author of my being, left me a hundred thousand francs a year. A young man like me, settled on the pavé of Paris, cannot do with a centime less. I spend half of it on my stable; and yet I have only three race-horses, or, strictly speaking, two and a half. The rest allows me to be loved, at second hand, for my own sake, as amant de cœur, by the flower of the world of crinoline. Yesterday I was friends with Nana, whom I shall leave to-morrow for Tata, unless the azure breeze of fancy wafts me into Zaza's lap. I shall not ruin myself, never fear! I know my arithmetic, and that is all I ever learnt at school. I expect to go on quietly in that way, to the end of my life, after the example of several venerable gentlemen who now adorn the Boulevard. Confess that I should be the biggest of simpletons to share this modest income with an everyday prude and a heap of little Thibautodés, who would not afford me the slightest amusement."

Poor honest Vigneron was deeply disgusted with this precocious mannikin, rotten before he was ripe, and was setting to work to give him a lesson; but his speech was put down with so unanimous a groan, that eloquence to that effect was superfluous. When the row subsided, a handsome fellow of five-and-thirty took up the discourse, and said:

"Don't believe, monsieur, that stupid selfishness and a taste for easy pleasures are the sole reasons which deter us from marrying. I am neither a selfish nor an idle man. I have worked for my own living all my life, and my only regret is that I cannot work for a family. But consider my position, and tell me what you would do in my place. I have raised myself, not without difficulty, to an appointment of twelve thousand francs a year. My income suffices to maintain me. If——"

"One moment," Vigneron interposed. "Marry a wife who will bring you as much. That is the way to make comfortable establishments."

"In the country, perhaps; in Paris, no. You are not aware, monsieur, what Paris has become within the last few years. A wife who brought me twelve thousand francs a year, would add more to my expenses than to my income. In the first place, she would expect to spend, herself, in dress, furniture, dinner-giving, show, the full interest of her capital. I should be well off if she abstained from trenching upon my own earnings. The position which I occupy opens to her the doors of a certain class of society; by what reason should I be able to persuade her not to enter it? She would

answer, without hesitation, 'I married you for that, monsieur, and for nothing else.' If I take her there, she will discover, as soon as she has crossed the threshold, that she is not so well dressed as Madame So-and-so. She will not perhaps insist on my giving her as many diamonds as she beholds sparkling on other ladies; but, by way of compensation, she will require to be got up by the most fashionable dressmaker going. Do you know the average cost of a ball to the husband of the most reasonable wife? Three hundred francs! Manage that with an income of two thousand francs per month. I say nothing about children; with only one son, we should be in poverty. And he, poor little wretch! What should we have to leave him, except our debts? In the country, respectable people almost always save; because, in the country, they live for themselves. In Paris, honest people almost all run into debt, because they are obliged to live for others. I am not talking of the single man, who has the right to be a philosopher; but the married man is the slave of a slave. He belongs to his wife, who belongs to vanity."

"Monsieur," said Vigneron, warmly protesting against so sweeping an accusation, "there are sensible women to be found even in Paris."

The gentleman smiled politely, and condescendingly replied, "Yes, monsieur; I am acquainted with more than one. I even believe that in general women are more reasonable than men. In the first place, they are more temperate, and abstain from the poisons which trouble the brain. You will find sensible women amongst the common people—innocent victims of the public-house; amongst the small shopkeepers, who lay aside sou by sou, to meet a bill or pay their rent. You will find them in a higher sphere amongst all women of a certain age, who have passed five-and-forty, and who own it. These latter have received a more solid education than the animated dolls manufactured now; they have had time for reading, and have acquired the habit of thinking. They dwell on a moral elevation, in which the riot of the Boulevards, the bottles broken at 'la Marche,' and the chansons of Mademoiselle Thérèse, awake no echo."

"Ah!" murmured Vigneron, with increasing interest.—"The folly which I blame only rages in a special medium, within a sort of ring fence, in which several thousand women of unequal rank, fortune, and beauty, are perpetually striving to eclipse each other. This medium, in which our lot unfortunately is cast, is what is called, par excellence, 'the world.' The girls who danced here to-night are girls of the world; and marry on the sole condition of becoming women of the world. Now the obligation to find lodgings, carriages, dress, and ornaments for a woman of the world, hot in the pursuit of worldly steeple-chases, entails at present such an amount of outlay that an intelligent bachelor will look twice before he incurs it."

"But, monsieur," pleaded Vigneron, "there is no pleasure without pain. Happiness costs a little dearer in Paris than it does in the provinces; but it is consequently all the more highly relished."

At this, another speaker, a man of forty, went off like a rocket. "Happiness!" he shouted. "Of what sort of happiness are you speaking, if you please? I am a widower, and I give you my solemn promise that you won't catch me at that phase of happiness again. I did not regard money in the least. My fortune is only too considerable, for all the good I ever got out of it. From all quarters I had offers of marriage portions. I said, No. Since I have the means of marrying the woman who pleases me, I will take a poor one, and she will thank me for it. I therefore married a parvenue. I raised to my own position one of those poor desolate creatures who hawk about a forced smile, a melancholy bait at which nobody bites. I did bite. There was a family. I provided for the family."

"Doubtless you had your reward."

"They proved to me, figures in hand, that to produce mademoiselle and bring her forth into the light of day, they had got into debt a hundred thousand francs. I paid it. I had then only to pocket my happiness, and walk away with it. A pretty joke! My wife, so long as she was not my wife, agreed with me on every point. The day after the wedding, she drew up her head as stiff as a rattlesnake. She unmasked a whole battery of stupidities, old and new, ready to fire at my poor common sense. She had a creed of her own, principles of her own, a confessor of her own, a literature and a pharmacopœa of her own, with a whole battalion of female friends of her own, which never, thank Heaven, have been mine. My tastes are simple; hers were quite the contrary. My father left me a name of which I am proud, and a title for which I do not care a straw. One belongs to one's epoch; my wife belonged to hers. The right to call herself 'marquise' was too much for her poor weak head. She dragged my coat of arms out of its retreat, to stick it on the panels of my carriage, on my plate, linen, carpets, furniture. I only wonder she did not clap it on my back. She was born Dupont in the male line, and Mathieu in the female. Take care, therefore, how you marry a 'bourgeoise' out of love for simplicity! After two years of the most disunited union that ever fettered a well-meaning man, I was neither master nor servant in my own house. My wife, backed by half a dozen dear friends, had usurped everything. They gave slander-parties at my expense, at home and abroad. Every Saturday, seven Christian mouths confessed my iniquities to a worthy Jesuit. Thoroughly worn out, I escaped by the door; and I ask you, Monsieur the Moralist, what you would have done in my place? My wife was not a woman, but something hollow, endowed with locomotion, warm, restless, and overstocked with nerves; a fountain of tears, an orchestra of cries, a catapult of convulsions, a galvanic pile. And all her friends (I have only reckoned six, but they might be a

dozen) were as like her as one drop of acid is like another. My wife is dead—Heaven be praised!—but the others survive, and they have their imitators. The world of Paris lies before them; may my guardian angel keep me out of their way!"

Every guest applauded this tirade; whence Vigneron concluded that they all agreed with the orator. And though he had hitherto preached the holy cause of matrimony, he could not help admitting that the Parisian bachelors had some little reason for their strike. M. About, however, says: "Suitors of Paris, strike if you please; but don't try to draw us into the movement! We are country people, and contrive to find the wives we require, because we take the trouble to fashion them ourselves. I wish you may hit upon the same happy method."

But, whether as a joke or a real fact, the Publicité newspaper of Marseilles reports that the matrimonial strike is gaining ground in France. "Six thousand single men, from twenty to forty years of age, met on the common of Belle-de-Mai, and there, hand in hand, swore not to think of marrying until fresh orders; that is, until a radical change has taken place in our young ladies' ways and doings. No more ruinous dress; no more coquetry; no more expensive idleness; but a return to economical and homely life, to conduct becoming mothers of families and the habits of modest wives. Such are the terms laid down. Therefore, let the fair sex in France take warning; the matter is more serious than they fancy."

Still, a few advertisements, quite recently inserted, prove that the universal nation has not taken vows of celibacy. Samples are given, with true initials and address, to enable our readers to judge and act for themselves, entirely on their own responsibility.

Marriage.—A Monsieur desires to unite himself to a young lady with either small or considerable fortune. Write, Post Restante, Paris. V. A. S.

Notice to Families.—A young foreigner, a very suitable match, and in the receipt of an income of fifteen thousand francs, desires to marry a young lady from seventeen to twenty years of age, pretty, well educated, and belonging to an honourable family. Write and send portrait to M. Léon Rehana, Poste Restante, Paris.

Three hundred single women or widows to marry, in every position of fortune.—M. Bourrillon, secret intermediary of families, 24, Rue de Rivoli, receives visits every Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday, from two till five.

A Mr. of fifty-two years, income eight thousand francs, desires to marry suitably. X. Jan., Poste Restante, Paris.

A Monsieur of forty years, income ten thousand francs, would unite himself to a single lady or widow of from twenty-five to thirty-five years, possessing from fifty to one hundred thousand francs dowry. M. M., post paid, Poste Restante, Paris.

Serious Marriage.—A public functionary, of irreproachable conduct, single, thirty-one years of age, appointments two thousand four hundred francs, very agreeable employment, taking little time, and allowing him to engage in other occupations, possessed of six thousand francs savings, desires to espouse a young lady of respectable family, with a portion, or an eligible little establishment in Paris. Honourability is the first requisite. Write, pre paid, Poste Restante, to the initials K. R. S.

AMATEUR FINANCE.

IN THREE PARTS. PART I.

"Is it possible to live upon a hundred and fifty pounds a year?"

This was the question I put to myself one morning while occupied with my after-breakfast pipe. I had just sold out of the army, and my commission had been disposed of for the regulation price of eighteen hundred pounds (for I was captain in an infantry regiment), plus eight hundred pounds "above regulation," which my successor, being a wealthy man and very ambitious of promotion, had given me, as an inducement to leave the service. This was the sum total of my worldly riches—two thousand six hundred pounds; but per contra, as the ledgers say, I owed some little money: the after-crop of a not very large quantity of debt seed, which I had sown with pretty steady perseverance, during my ten years of military life. To make a long story short, when I had settled with every one, had squared matters with all my creditors, and had invested my balance both securely and at a very favourable rate of interest, my annual income, I found, would come within a few shillings of one hundred and fifty pounds.

Now, there are very different ways of interpreting the meaning of the verb, to live. With some people it means the wherewith to keep a house over your head, feed and clothe yourself and family, and pay your way as you go along. To others, a town mansion, a country house, a carriage, horses, grooms, footmen, and women servants, are included in the actual necessaries of life: to say nothing of an autumnal trip to the Continent, fox-hunting in the winter, and parties every night, during the London season. I have known a country clergyman live respectably, bring up a large family of children, pay his way honestly, and put by something for a rainy day, on five hundred pounds a year. I have also known bachelors with five thousand per annum, who were always in pecuniary difficulties. With me, "to live," meant to have comfortable lodgings in London; to be able to dine well at "The Rag," whenever I was not invited out; to have the wherewith to go to this or that friend's shooting-box in the autumn; to run over for two or three weeks to Paris, in the spring, and to Homburg, when so inclined; to have money in moderation in my pocket whenever I wanted it; in short, not to deny myself anything in reason, for want of funds. Could this be done for a hundred and fifty pounds a

year? Certainly not. My tailor's bill alone would absorb more than a third of that sum, and for "sundries," pocket money, and dinner, I required, without any undue extravagance, at least a pound a day. It was very clear, therefore, that, after the fashion which men of the world call life, my existence would be nought but utter misery unless I could spend at least five hundred a year. The problem to solve, therefore, was, how could my income be increased from one hundred and fifty to five hundred per annum?

I belong to that numerous class of English gentlemen, who, not being brought up to any particular calling or profession, can do little or nothing towards earning even dry bread, far less bread and cheese. It is true, I had been for some ten years in the army; but soldiering cannot be called a trade, or, if it be one, I certainly had not so learned the trade as to make it of any use to me in after life. To me—as to hundreds of young men—the service had been but a gentlemanly way of passing my time. The rudiments of drill I knew as well as most men; I could command my company on parade without making mistakes, even when the said company was acting as skirmishers at an Aldershott review, under the eyes of old Pennefather. The details about paying, clothing, feeding, and lodging the men, I left to my colour sergeant; still, I was sufficiently acquainted with the rules and regulations of the army, to be able to check him when anything went wrong. In short, I was a fair average regimental officer of the post-Crimean school.

It might have been possible for me to get a county police appointment, but it would have greatly interfered with my schemes of future enjoyment.

"Why not turn speculator?" said my friend Vernon of the Guards, one night in the smoking-room of his club, after I had been his guest at dinner in that comfortable establishment, and had propounded my difficulties to him: "Why not become one of your regular City fellows, and turn speculator? They have always lots of money, and don't seem to work very hard for it. Their chief business—I know two or three of them—seems to be to go into the city every day at about eleven o'clock with an umbrella, and walk back at about four. It is not very hard work, and I am sure you would make money, as well as have plenty of time to enjoy yourself when you get back to the West-end."

"Why not turn speculator?" He might as well have asked me why not turn cardinal, or Baptist preacher, or surgical lecturer. To have plenty of money I was by no means loth to walk in the City every day with an umbrella, and remain there from eleven to four. But what to do when I got there—how or where to find the money, or in what way was I to make it? It was not possible—so I reasoned with myself—that there could be, somewhere east of Temple-bar, a society or an individual that paid gentlemanly-looking men a certain large weekly salary for walking into the City every day with umbrellas under their arms. Still, in some respects, now that I thought of it, Vernon was right. I myself knew several individuals who had not been brought up to business, but who had now turned "speculators," or "City fellows;" who had no offices of their own; who walked every day to the east with umbrellas under their arms; and who seemed to make a handsome living, or at least enough to keep themselves handsomely. The difficulty with me was, where to begin to learn, or how to find out, the real nature of the business or work performed by a "City fellow."

Belonging to our club—the Army and Navy, otherwise the "Rag" before mentioned—there was a gentleman who, although he was always called "Captain" by the waiters, had certainly no claim to that title, seeing that he had been only twelve months in the army, and that it was more than twenty years since he had sold out as a cornet. Smithson—that was his name—had, when a boy at school, conceived the idea that he would like to be a soldier, and had tormented every one belonging to, or connected with, his family, until he got his name put down for a commission. In those days candidates for the army had no examination to pass before entering the service, or I fear Smithson would have had a poor chance of ever wearing a red coat. As it was, he obtained what he wanted, but not until he was upwards of twenty years old, at which age he was gazetted to a heavy dragoon regiment. Coming up to London with his father, getting himself measured for scarlet coats—the heavies of those anti-tunic days wore tail-coats—fitted with helmet, "let in" with chargers, buckled with sword, put into overalls; hampered with regulation spurs, and made the general victim of outfitters, tailors, military accoutrement-makers, and horse-dealers, was pretty good fun, and Smithson liked it well enough. Even when he went down to join his corps at Birmingham, and found himself master of a barrack-room neatly furnished by his outfitter, with a tall heavy dragoon servant, who called him "sir" every moment, wore his shirts, drank his private store of brandy, and smoked his cigars, Smithson was far from being unhappy. To dine at mess, and be able to call for wine, luncheon, or anything else he wanted (or thought he wanted), was an immense pleasure to this young "plunger;" likewise to put on his undress uniform, and ride or walk through the streets, "showing off." But soon there came a change. The rules and regulations of the service required that Smithson should go through the ordinary course of riding-school drill, and he was ordered to put himself under the directions of the riding-master: a crabbed old officer, who had risen from the ranks, who never dined at mess, who had nine children, small pay, and a wife who was the dread of the regimental sergeant-major himself.

To riding-school, then, Smithson had to go, and to commence his torments was ordered to mount, walk, and trot his horse with "stirrups up"—that is, to bump round the school without stirrups. A day of this exercise—an hour

in the morning, and one in the afternoon—was bad enough; but when it came to day after day, week after week, and month after month of it, no man—at least no Smithson—could stand it. He first complained to his colonel that he could not get through the school. The colonel asked the riding-master, who declared that Smithson could not ride, and therefore ought still to be kept bumping round without stirrups; Smithson himself got disgusted, and after a time sold out. There was nothing against him, except, either he could not ride, or that the crabbed riding-master did not like to lose a victim. Smithson retired from the service under the shade of his club, and from that day to this has been "Captain Smithson."

To Smithson I went, to ask how men made money by going into the City every day with umbrellas under their arms for a few hours? Though Smithson had not taken honours as a dragoon, he was far from being a fool. Twenty years of London life had taught him a few things worth knowing, and therefore I thought that I could not do better than apply to Smithson.

His reply showed that my confidence was not misplaced. "You want to make money?" he said; "then be a director. I'll find you a company in which you can obtain a seat at the board, and you will then merely have to go into the City every day for a few hours (with an umbrella), in order to become a wealthy man."

"But," I objected, "I never was educated to business; I know nothing about it; I should most likely make a mess of the very first thing I put my hand to."

"Don't be an ass," was Smithson's reply. "Do you imagine that half the men whose names you see figuring in the lists of directors know anything about business? Look at Sims—you remember Sims, who was in the 110th? Where did Sims learn anything about business, or business matters? And yet he is director on the boards of seven companies, each of which give him three guineas a week—three times seven's twenty-one, and fifty-two times twenty-one make a thousand and ninety-two guineas—not pounds—a year. I don't say that you can do as well as Sims at first; of course you can't. But you will do quite as well a year or two hence; perhaps better. Sims is a fool; you are not. Sims has no money; you have some—though not much. Be guided by me, and you will thank me for having put you at your ease, as the French say, before six months are over."

Acting upon Smithson's advice, I at once borrowed, on the security of the mortgage in which what little money I had was invested, the sum of five hundred pounds. This amount I deposited as a drawing or current account in a highly respectable bank, to which I had obtained an introduction. Having this reference behind me, I was, through Smithson's means, introduced to a gentleman who was trying to get up a direction for the "Rio Grande Talhook Silver and United Lead Mining Company (Limited)." This gentleman was by profession a solicitor without practice; by occupation what is called "a promoter." He was none of your flash, well-to-do, Greenwich-dining, Cremorne-frequenting, establishment-in-St.-John's-Wood-keeping, promoters; but a poor, inoffensive, seedy creature, very civil, very much out at elbows, and apparently thankful for the smallest favours. When I was first introduced to him, he made a feeble attempt to persuade me, that in order to become a director of the "Rio Grande Talhook Silver and United Lead Mining Company (Limited)," I would be obliged to pay money down, before I could be qualified. Seeing, I presume, that such an idea was preposterous, or at least that I could not entertain it for a moment, he soon came round, and, after offering to qualify me for nothing, ended by acknowledging that if I wanted to be a director of the company, I could be paid for accepting a seat at the board. This I agreed to, and forthwith received an undertaking by which it was stipulated that in the event of my becoming a director, and provided that the company proceeded to an allotment, I was to be given one hundred shares, on each of which five pounds had been paid: thus receiving a bonus of five hundred pounds for joining a direction which was to give me three guineas a week for sitting at the board.

In due time, the Rio Grande Company was floated, and, considering it was a mining concern, it took very well indeed with the public. The directors were few in number, but they were fairly respectable, and among them I thought that my own name, "Captain Rickley, Army and Navy Club," read very well indeed.

As Smithson said, my name being on one direction was the first step that was wanting in order to make me a regular City man and man of business. A week after my name was published as a director of the Rio Grande, I had a couple of dozen applications to allow myself to be put on the board of other companies. Some of these were pretty respectable in their character, others the merest swindles, but one and all appeared most anxious to get directors. From those which appeared to be the best I selected three, and, receiving from each of these some five hundred pounds in paid-up shares, as well as three guineas a week for sitting at the board once every seven days, I soon began to find that my income had materially increased, and that I had done wisely in taking Smithson's advice. I now took up my umbrella every morning and walked to the City, coming back in about four hours with the pleasing knowledge that I was earning, in director's fees alone—to say nothing of the shares which had been given me—at least ten or twelve guineas a week, and that my income was likely to increase. It is true that the companies which I had joined were by no means first-rate concerns, but much the contrary. Besides the "Rio Grande Mining," I was on the direction of the "India-rubber Shoeing and Carriage-wheel Covering Company (Limited);" "The North-East of America Overland Traffic, Passenger,

AND TRADING COMPANY (LIMITED);" and "THE DIRECT TELEGRAPH TO BARBADOES COMPANY (LIMITED)."

All these served to give me a name in the City with a certain class, and before I had been twelve months at the work, my business as a director had increased so much that I was obliged to take an office and hire a clerk. Still—although taken collectively the number of boards at which I had a seat gave me a certain amount of respectability with the director-seeking, joint-stock-company-getting-up, share-allotting, world—not one of the concerns with which I was mixed up could be called even a second-class affair. As I got richer I became more and more ambitious of having my name connected with something that would give me a better commercial standing as well as more material wealth. I no longer asked myself whether I could possibly live upon a hundred and fifty pounds a year, for I knew I could spend five times that amount, and still put something by. My respectability as to money was undoubted. I left off frequenting the Rag, as being too "young" a club for a man in my position. I set up a brougham, kept my private account at Drummond's, had serious thoughts of taking a wife, and got myself elected a member of the Conservative Club.

My friendship for Smithson had not decreased, although I had distanced him in the race. Smithson was a director of one or two of my companies, but he did not push his luck with sufficient energy. If he had gone to bed early the night before (an event which very rarely happened), and could manage to get over his breakfast and cigar by ten o'clock next morning, he generally found his way on a board-day to the office. But for one board meeting that he was present at, he missed two.

About this time, credit and finance companies began to attract notice in London. One or two of these concerns had been started, and others were about to come out. Talking over the probable gains of such undertakings, in the board-room of the Rio Grande Company, three or four of the directors agreed to start a finance company for themselves, and invited Smithson and myself to come on the direction. We both consented, and in very few days we published to the world a scheme by which people had only to take shares in this concern, in order to become wealthy beyond the hopes of ordinary mortals. The name of our company was, the "GENERAL HOUSE AND LAND FINANCE AND CREDIT COMPANY (LIMITED);" the managing director was to be myself, the secretary was to be Smithson, my salary was to be two thousand a year, Smithson's was to be eight hundred, and every director was to have a five-pound note each time he attended a board meeting.

The business which the "GENERAL HOUSE AND LAND FINANCE" proposed to do, was as follows: Our nominal capital was to be a million, but of this only two hundred and fifty thousand pounds were to be called up for the present. We intended to invite depositors to place their money with us, and, to induce them to do so, we offered them a much higher rate of interest than was current with the joint-stock banks. The money thus lent us—say at five per cent—we lent out again at ten, twelve, and even a higher per-centage, taking the security of houses, lands, or any other immovable property, for our repayment. This alone would have left us a wide margin for profit, notwithstanding the great office expenses we had to pay. But we intended to do better than that. We meant not only to lend and charge a high rate of interest for the money of our depositors, but to lend, and charge for, our acceptances, which was—in England at least—a scheme entirely new, and which could hardly fail to be profitable. Thus, suppose an individual who owned houses and land to the amount of say ten thousand pounds, wanted to borrow money upon them. To raise a mortgage in the ordinary way, was a matter of time, expense, and greater or less publicity. He could not take the property in his pocket to the bank, and ask them to discount it as he would a bill; and to deposit title-deeds with a banker—when he will take them—as security for loans, injures a man's credit very much. The intending borrower—who seldom wants the accommodation for any length of time, but always wishes the affair to be kept secret—would therefore come to us, and upon the security of his ten thousand pounds' worth of property, would ask for an advance of six thousand pounds for a year. We should reply that we could not give him the cash, but if he liked to draw upon us, we would accept bills for that amount, and not charge him more than ten per cent for doing so.

Knowing that the kites flown by a finance company of good credit could be discounted at any bank at the current rates of the day, the borrower invariably accepted our offer. We were made quite safe, by the title-deeds which were left with us; and he was content with getting his money, although he had to pay a somewhat higher rate of interest for the use of it. On the other hand, the finance company got a good rate of interest for merely putting its name to bills, which were quite secure from having the title-deeds of property, with a very large margin, in hand. When transactions of this kind came to be multiplied, no wonder that we hoped to declare a dividend of at least twenty-five per cent upon our paid-up capital.

But there was another means of making money which we profited very largely by. At the period I write of—as is still the case—joint-stock companies of various sorts were "floated," with greater or less success, every day of the week. After a time it became impossible for any of these schemes to take with the public, unless the concern were palpably "a good thing," or unless some finance company stood godfather for it before the share-taking world. Thus, to us there would perhaps come a gentleman who had a patent by which writing-paper could be made out of old ink, or plate glass fabricated from turnip-tops. The patent might be good—

excellent—in its way, but the unfortunate patentee never had money with which to bring it to the notice of the public. He might be able to bring in three or four good men as directors, but that was all. Where could he get the four or five hundred pounds that were necessary to advertise, hire offices, print several thousand copies of a prospectus, and do all the hundred needful things that must be done before a joint-stock affair can be floated? In his dilemma he would come to us. We agreed to provide everything—for a consideration, of course. We took upon ourselves all the expenses of advertising; we got the prospectus published, and lent the prestige of our name; we puffed, wrote up, and praised the scheme through our several agents. If the project died before the shares were allotted, we got nothing—there was nothing to get—for our trouble. If it "floated," we received a premium of from five to twenty thousand pounds out of the first deposits paid. We were in most cases winners. For our immense fee, we had not pledged ourselves to anything. If any company we "brought out" had come to grief, we should not have lost sixpence by it. On the contrary, there was more than one concern which had been launched into the world under the shadow of our wing, and which died a natural death. But what cared we? Our fee had been paid—it was always the very first charge which had to be paid—and it was of no consequence to us whether or not the young company lived or died.

After the first six months we declared a dividend upon our paid-up capital, at the rate of thirty per cent per annum; besides putting aside some twenty thousand pounds as the commencement of a reserve fund.

What surprised me, was the ease with which I got over my duties as managing director of the "General House and Land Finance and Credit Company." Before becoming a director in this undertaking, I had had no financial experience whatever. However, I managed to do pretty good yeoman's work. As time went on, I got accustomed to the business, and not ill versed in the various ways of making money for the concern. Smithson, our secretary, also got through his duties well, and any one not knowing our antecedents, would have hardly believed that we were both mere ex-soldiers, who hardly knew on which side of the ledger to write the debit and on which the credit of an account.

But fortune favoured us. Shortly after our company commenced business, a new species of joint-stock fever broke out suddenly. Every firm in which the partners were getting old, or of which the affairs were at the foundation a little shaky, seemed determined to make the concern a joint-stock company. Hitherto such undertakings had been got up by individual promoters, and had assumed a name which indicated what business they intended doing. But now we had "Smith and Co. (Limited);" "Jones, Wilson, and Co. (Limited);" "Mason, Watson, and Co. (Limited);" and a hundred other companies of the sort cropping up in every day's Times. As our credit stood good, and as we had the good sense to ask fees for launching new concerns which were lower than those of other similar companies, we obtained a good deal of work. It is true that we had sometimes to put a bold face upon introducing to the public something that would not bear a very close investigation. And one case of this sort I will relate in another chapter.

BEAUTIFUL GIRLS.

When I was younger than I am now, was particular about my waistcoats, and carried a sense of my whiskers about with me like a solemn responsibility, I was accustomed, when called upon at evening parties and other high festivals, to sing, in a sentimental and foolish tenor, a song called "The Maids of Merry England, How beautiful are they!" I remember I used to sing both at the beginning of the verse and at the end of the verse; and I sung it with becoming gravity, as if it had been a patriotic toast or a sentiment about the wing of friendship. I have now in my mind's eye a vision of myself singing that song; and the vision is suggestive of something, on the whole, idiotic. Every hair of my head is in its proper place, glistening with macassar; my whiskers are carefully brushed out to make the most of them; my waistcoat is spotless; my white handkerchief is redolent of the latest perfume; and there I stand at the piano with a chest like a pouter pigeon, my head in the air, and my eyes on the ceiling, singing—The Maids of Merry England, How beautiful are they, with all the gravity proper to the execution of a sacred song from an oratorio. I remember that the maids of merry England who were privileged to listen to me sat around with their hands folded, and looked grave and solemn, as if it had been a sad truth that I was reminding them of. I don't think that there was any moral to the effect that beauty was only skin deep, and was doomed to fade, and that flesh, though fair, was only grass; but it was in that admonitory sense we took the sentiment, and it checked our levity, and made us all very seriously and solemnly happy. Ah me! those days of sentiment and flowered waistcoats are gone—gone, I fear, never to return. I now sing what are called comic songs, at evening parties, and instead of being sentimental about the unadorned beauty of the maids of merry England, am lyrically facetious about their crinolines and their back hair.

This is a pity; for in these days the maids of merry England have made themselves so very attractive, that it would be easy to be both sentimental and poetical about them. The sentiment, when I used to sing that song, was a mere formula. It was like singing about hearts of oak, Britannia, the ocean, and all that sort

of thing. It was not very new, it was not very true, and nobody cared particularly about the sentiment except as an excuse for singing a song. If it had been the hills or the vales or the back-gardens of merry England, we should have equally taken it for granted that they were beautiful.

At the time of which I speak, not quite twenty years ago, the maids of merry England were not so beautiful as they are at the present time; at least, they were not so attractive. It was the time which immediately preceded the introduction of crinoline; shoes and sandals were in vogue, leg-of-mutton sleeves and high waists had gone out, but bonnets were still pokey, and the female figure was made up after the clock-case model, which we are led to believe ruled the fashions in Noah's ark. There was little shape or make about the maid of merry England at that period. It was impossible to see her profile without a background of bonnet. All the wealth of beauty that lay as yet undiscovered in her hair, was plastered down over her temples in formal sheets of polished veneer, or tied up in a wisp and hid in a box behind. The only variety was a bunch of prim corkscrew curls which hung on either side of her face like ornaments for your fire-stoves. I almost fancy there was an idea that in order to look modest, and maidenly, and feminine, it was necessary to put the natural beauties of the face and figure a little in the shade.

Comparatively, the maids of merry England were beautiful, but they seemed to be afraid of being superlatively so. The manners of the maids at that time partook of the sober and rigid character of their costume. They were apt to sit with their hands folded, to deny themselves victuals and drink in support of the genteel fiction that appetite was not maidenly, to refrain from speaking save when spoken to, and to have doubts about the propriety of dancing. It was a complaint of the time that the young ladies laced too tightly. That was true in a double sense: their moral natures were as tightly laced as their bodices. It was at about this time that the American ladies put the legs of their pianos into trousers.

The great transformation scene took place shortly after the International Exhibition of 1851. Harlequin Progress batted (technical term for using his wand), and the old woman in the cloak was suddenly transformed into a fairy princess. The clock-case, and the poke bonnet, and the flat shoes, disappeared through the trap, and there was the princess in her expansive gauze skirt and natty boots, crowned with a cockle-shell. Before, she had hobbled like an old crone; now, she is on one toe pirouetting like a Peri! I am not going to enlarge, like a fashion book, on the graces of crinoline. It is not always graceful, and it is sometimes a nuisance—for it is proverbial that you can have too much even of a good thing—but I believe it is a fact that the adoption of this article of female attire was the foundation of all the elegancies of dress that have since been built upon it. It did away with the rigid straight line, and introduced a graceful curve, and from that moment it became necessary that all things should be in an artistic concatenation accordingly. The bell-shaped dress obviated any necessity for tight lacing, by rendering the natural form of the body harmonious and compatible with the whole design. Under this new impetus, elegance and comfort went hand in hand. High-heeled boots harmonised with the embroidered petticoat (which was now an article of ornament as well as use), and high-heeled boots showed off a handsome foot, and at the same time kept the handsome foot out of the wet. Then followed the picturesque burnous, and the elegant lace shawl, both so superior in every way to the old three-cornered Paisley, or Indian, blanket, and the dowdy silk mantle that looked as if it were made out of veneer.

The bonnet was a very stubborn thing to deal with. The original model—which our women folks were too conservative to depart from altogether—was radically wrong. It was never adapted to any head whatever, and the fashion of twisting the hair into a knot behind rendered any attempt to reduce its proportions only an aggravation of the discomfort it caused. The front of the coal-scuttle admitted of various more or less graceful modifications; but the back remained an inexorable box, until some one hit upon the happy idea of cutting the back of the box out, and letting the great wealth of beauty that lies in the hair, flow out in natural luxuriance to delight the eyes of men. It was only the other day that women discovered the great treasure of beauty which lay in their hair. Formerly, the primary object of their dressing seemed to be to tie it up and plaster it down and put it out of sight. I suppose this prejudice—for it can be nothing else—came to us from the Puritans. What a long time we have been in outgrowing the austere fashions of those gloomy people!

Mr. Ruskin, who is allowed to be a judge of such matters, says that the present style of female dress is the most graceful and artistic ever worn. I quite agree with him, and I think it has had almost a magical effect in bringing out and setting off the beauty of the maids of merry England. There are no plain girls now-a-days. Positive ugliness is altogether banished from the land. All the girls are pretty. Walking in the streets, or driving in the Park, or sitting in a box at the Opera, one is kept in a state of continual admiration by the numbers of pretty girls that meet the eye on every hand. All this female beauty has of course existed at any time; but I venture to think that it is only lately that it has been shown off to the fullest advantage. In these days of economics and art training we know how to make the most and the best of things. Mark what a mine of beauty has been discovered in red hair. How many years is it, since red hair was contemptuously denominated "carrots"? To be carroty

was to be a fright, and an allusion to a carroty girl, in a song or play, was sure to raise a laugh of derision. But now, carrots are the fashion, the rage. The girl with the ruddy locks, instead of plastering her hair down, to look like polished slabs of Peterhead granite, combs it out and lets the sun into it, and straightway it is a fleece of gold. Golden locks—that is to say, the ridiculed "carrots" of another period—are now the admiration of all the men, and the envy of all the women. It is no secret, I believe, that many women are in the habit of bleaching their dark hair in order to impart to it a tinge of the fashionable and admired red. I am informed, too—and I can add my personal testimony to the fact—that red-haired girls who have been on the shelf until they are no longer young, are now going off in the matrimonial market like wildfire.

The great discovery that women have made, however, is not that auburn hair—as they love to call it—is particularly pretty; but that any coloured hair is pretty when naturally and artistically displayed. In fact, they have discovered that their hair is their chief beauty. I hold, that no woman can be ugly, or even plain, if she have a profusion of hair. The eye is nearly always a beautiful thing in woman. The mouth may be large and ungraceful, the nose may turn up, the cheeks may be too thin or too plump, but the eye, in its normal and natural state, is rarely without beauty, either of form or expression. Good eyes and a wealth of hair will cover a multitude of deficiencies in other respects. Our maiden aunts have found this out, and these elderly ladies are now as smart and almost as juvenile as our sweethearts. In fact, when Miss Tabitha and Miss Edith are out walking together, it is hard to say, until you come to close quarters, which is the old girl and which is the young one.

The moral influence of dress is well known to every one who has been exhilarated by clean linen, or depressed by an ill-fitting coat. I believe that we take a great deal of our moral tone from the cut of our clothes. A good condition of the clothes we wear, is necessary to sustain our self-satisfaction and complacency, but cut and fashion give elegance and ease. If you are sensible of being a guy, your comportment will be weak and ineffective. You cannot strut like a peacock when you know that your feathers are those of a turkey. You must have a sense of being up to the mark, before you can practise an elegant walk, or adopt an imposing swagger. When our dress was ungraceful and uncomfortable, we ourselves were ungraceful and uncomfortable also. The recent fashions have worked a wonderful change in this respect. The maids of merry England are much more lively than they used to be. They are more sprightly, they have more to say for themselves, and their manners, which formerly were cold and stiff and artificial, have now become easy and natural.

Viewing such a wealth of female beauty, and seeing on every hand so many charming faces and graceful figures, I am sometimes disposed to look at our girls as the Scottish maiden looked at love—in the abstract. As an elderly fellow, and in the abstract, I am apt to think that our girls are too pretty to be married. When some great hulking fellow, with an elaborate shirt-front—which is generally his principal feature—comes into our society, and leads off (to St. George's, Hanover-square) one of those pretty girls, who sing to me and prattle to me, and are the delight of my eyes with their sprightly and engaging ways, I feel a very strong inclination to kick him. I regard him as a bloated monopolist, a Vandal, a Goth, an iconoclast. I have written up, "Do not touch the statues," and he *has* touched the statues; I have warned him not to pluck my flowers, and he has plucked them from under my very nose. This is very aggravating to an elderly fellow like myself—fellows who are either confirmed bachelors or very much married, and who consequently are privileged to regard love "in the abstract." Which, by the way, is a very pleasant and innocent way of looking at it.

I will say this, however, that St. George's, Hanover-square, has not now that blighting influence upon my flowers that it used to have in the old days. In those old days, when my pretty girls got married, they thought it a privilege and an obligation of their new state to disregard the elegancies of dress. They very soon got dowdy, and began to wear caps; and the consequence was, that the hulking fellow with the elaborate shirt-front very soon began to be indifferent. But, now-a-days, when the cap period approaches, the matron renews her youth with some clever little trick of hair-dressing, which makes her look almost as young as her daughters. The world is all the brighter and pleasanter for these elegant and sprightly habits of our women folks. I only hope that, while they have learned to wear becoming clothes, and to dress their hair, they are not neglecting the art of making a flaky crust.

CUTTING OUT CATTLE.

THERE is great bustle and excitement at the cattle station this afternoon, for we begin to muster fat cattle and "strangers" to-morrow, and the stockmen from all the neighbouring stations have come to assist, and take away their stray stock.

We mean to start in the cool of the evening, ride over the plains about twenty miles, and camp out, so as to begin our work at daylight in the morning. All hands, blacks and whites, are very busy, catching horses down at the yard, saddling, rolling up blankets, and preparing for a day or two "out back on the plains." Maneroo Jim is catching a buck-jumping colt from among the crowd of kicking and screaming horses assembled in the yard: an operation not to be accomplished without a good deal of swearing, and flourishing of long sticks. At

last the colt is drafted out of the crowd, and "bailed up" in a corner of the high rail fences which constitute the horse-yard; a saddle is as firmly secured on his back as girths, surcingle, and crupper can do it; and he is led out into the paddock. Jim is a tall lathy Sydney native, with long hair, and a brown face: a great swell in his way, with his white shirt, his white sailor-cut moleskin trousers, his little cabbage-tree hat and long black ribbons. The colt is a strong chesnut, five years old; he was roped, handled, and backed, two months ago; has been turned out since, and is fat and jolly. As he stands, with his back up, his tail tucked in, and showing the white of his wicked eyes, he looks vicious; what Jim calls "a regular nut, and no flies." Jim's mate catches hold of the colt's ear, and hangs on to it, while Jim gets well into his big colonial saddle and short stirrups.

"Let un go!" says Jim, and, with his back arched, his head and tail tucked in between his legs, and his feet together, the buck-jumper executes a rapid series of springs into the air, each accompanied with a jerk from his powerful loins. "Stick to him, Jim!" shout the delighted lookers-on, as the colt goes bucking round in a circle, screaming savagely at every bound. Jim does stick to him, throwing himself right back in the saddle at every plunge, and laying into his mount vigorously with a green hide-cutting whip.

Peace being established between these two, consequent on the colt's exhaustion, we all take a good drink of water, light our pipes, and start, a party of fifteen or sixteen, two or three "swells," seven or eight stockmen, and some black boys. Most of us have spare horses leading alongside of us; each has his blanket, quart pot, and a bit of bread and beef, packed on his back. Our party jogs quietly along, out through the low polygonum scrub which skirts the river, on to the great grey plain stretching like a sea before us, past the quiet milking cattle, that stray about the home station, past distant lines of cows and bullocks marching solemnly along converging tracks to their accustomed watering-place, past mobs of wilder cattle, that run together as we approach, stare awhile at us, then start, galloping for some place of rendezvous or "camp." Jim's colt wants a canter, so he is started off to "round them up." He gallops round them once or twice, and stops them on a little sand-hill.

An hour more, and, ahead of us, a couple of miles off, is a mob of some kind, which, from its dark colour—there being nothing white among it—and its scattered appearance, we take to be a lot of horses. This causes some little excitement among our party, many of whom would dearly like to have a gallop after them, and try to "run them in" somewhere, for there are sometimes wild mobs in this part of the plains, with unclaimed stock, or "clear skins" among them, besides, perhaps, stray horses, for which rewards are to be had—stockmen's perquisites. Horses, sure enough! They come, thirty or forty of them, thundering down towards us, in a cloud of dust, violently exciting our nags. A quarter of a mile from us, they stop short, heads and tails up, stare and snort a moment, then some old mare anxious for her foal's safety starts away at a hand gallop, the kicking and screaming crowd take an undecided turn, then follow her at twenty miles an hour; a great black stallion, tail in air, ears laid back, and nose to the ground, whipping in the rearmost. Nelson, Trump, and Fly, three tall brindled kangaroo hounds, have followed us without orders. Some one says, "There's a warrigal!" and sure enough we see a yellow wild dog jumping up in the air to get a look at us over the tops of the low cotton bushes. The dogs have seen him too, and they are off like arrows, with their bristles up and with murder in their eyes. Warrigal canters on leisurely, thinking they are only sheep-dogs, and cannot catch him. Not until he sees our whole squadron follow the hounds, led horses and all, at full gallop, quart pots and hobble-chains clattering and rattling, does he start to run for his life. Nelson catches him in half a mile, knocks him over, receives one hard nip from the warrigal's steel-trap jaws, and has him by the throat. A savage worry; and the sheep are rid of an enemy. We cut off his brush, light our pipes, and go back to our course again.

The sun is setting in a glory of coloured fire, illuminating the distant river timber we have left behind us, and the expanse of plain between us and it, with violet light, in which all distant objects seem strangely near and distinct. The clump of forest oak marking the water-hole where we mean to camp to-night is plainly in sight, from the high ground to the south of the desolate fifteen-mile swamp, when our friend Jim, whose colt has been going quietly and well for the last few miles, sees a great black snake. The snake prepares for action, coiling himself up, with his head and neck erect, and flattened venomously. Jim, forgetting that he is riding a young one, drops the coils of his sixteen-foot stock-whip, prepared to smite his enemy. The colt takes fright at the trailing thong, and starts bucking viciously in a circle, of which the angry snake is the centre. Jim's nerves are pretty strong, and few horses can throw him, but he looks awfully scared this time, for he thinks that if a strap or a buckle give way, he will be thrown right on the top of the poisonous reptile. "Sit tight, Jim, or the snake will have you!" shout the laughing lookers-on, and a black boy breaks the brute's back with a cut of his whip, takes off his head, and carries him to camp, to grill for his supper. Twilight does not last long, so we start into a canter for a mile or two, and soon arrive at our camping-place: a shallow water-hole, by a clump of ragged-looking trees, near which passes the boundary line of our run. Those confounded sheep of our neighbour's have been trespassing again, and have spoilt the water in the hole with their feet.

We find a fallen tree against which to make a fire, pull off our saddles, secure our horses' fore feet with hobbles, light the fire, fill the

quart pots, range them in a row where they will boil soonest, set our saddles and saddle-cloths to dry, and pick the softest and smoothest places we can find, to windward of the fire, to lie upon. A handful of tea is thrown into each quart as it boils, and supper commences; salt beef and damper disappearing with much rapidity. The water for tea is thick with clay, the beef is hard and salt, but we enjoy our supper vastly, and are silent during its consumption, after the manner of hungry men. Then, pipes are lighted, and yarns are spun, about the marvellous performances of certain stock-horses in "cutting out" cattle, or running wild mobs; about wonderful bargains in horse-flesh, or knowing devices for circumventing rival drovers. The black boys, at a little fire of their own, are crooning their monstrous corroborry songs, or shouting with laughter at some aboriginal joke, the point of which no white man ever could make out. A supply of firewood being collected, the horses looked at, a bell attached to one or two of them, and their hobbles shortened, very soon every one is asleep, each man with his head in his saddle, his feet to the fire, and his blanket drawn over his face. Now and then, some one wakes and listens. The bush is very silent at night, and the horse-bell can be heard a long way off; the only sound breaking the stillness, excepting perhaps the unearthly wailing howl of a wild dog, or the cuckoo-note of a mopoke owl. Towards morning, when the night is darkest, and every one else in their soundest sleep, our energetic friend, F., whose cattle we are gathering, wakes up; he notices that the eastern stars are becoming pale, and hears the twittering of an early bird, or the scream of a cockatoo. He knows by these signs and tokens that daylight is not far off; so he pulls on his boots, throws some wood on the fire, and sings out the bush réveillé, "Now then, lads, turn out here; don't let the sun burn your eyes out!" Thus adjured, the white men arise and light their pipes, yawning and warming themselves at the sparkling fire. Then the quart pots are refilled for breakfast, the black boys are roused out, and the appearance of a red streak in the east is hailed by a chorus of croaks from the crows, and an insane cachinnation from a pair of laughing jackasses located in the trees near us. We swallow our breakfast in haste, and are off, bridles in hand, to find our horses. It is still dim twilight, but we know in what direction to seek them, and soon hear the bell and clink of hobble-chains; as the light brightens, we see them scattered over the plain in twos and threes, some of them a mile or more away; that notorious old rogue, "Rocket," comes jumping along towards his home at a wonderful pace, in spite of his short hobbles, and followed by all the "up-the-river" nags. Archie starts after him, on the first horse he can catch, and soon brings him cantering back to camp.

By the time the red sun has shown his fiery face over the rim of the horizon, we are all mounted and ready, the spare horses are consigned to a black boy, to be driven loose to the rendezvous, and our general, F., divides his forces, and instructs his lieutenants. "Bill, you take three or four with you, and ride down the plains until you sight the lake timber; start all the cattle you see to your right, and send some one after them to see that they don't run to the Red Hill. You fetch the cattle from the scrubs, and don't let them gallop more than you can help." I am sent in another direction, with Archie and Jim, to the Abercrombie and Wantigong, for the bullocks and cows that there do congregate. F. rides away eastward with the black boys, to sweep together all the cattle that feed in that direction. Old Warry, the stock-horse, with F.'s red blanket strapped across his back, jogs off towards the rendezvous, followed in a string by the rest of our spare stud, whose services will be required later in the day. The old horse knows his way to every camp on the run, and is supposed to be a very fair judge of a bullock. Arrived at the bald red sand-hill, worn bare by thousands of hoofs, and scattered with the white skeletons of many defunct bullocks, which is the gathering-place for the many groups (or mobs) of cattle, he can see, shining white in the morning sun, for miles around. Billy-go-Nimble, the black boy, succeeds, by dint of much tact and contrivance, in catching most of his equine charges, taking off their packs, and hobbling them.

As the sun mounts higher, and the grey line of the distant river timber disappears in his glare, white moving clouds of dust begin to arise all around the horizon, merging into one another, and approaching the place where Billy sits smoking his pipe and watching the grazing horses. Soon the galloping cattle themselves become visible, as they stop and assemble for a moment on the top of some sand-hill in their course. Presently the strong leading bullocks, with dusty faces and tongues hanging out, trot on to the camp, and stand there panting, well pleased to arrive at, what they seem to consider, a haven of refuge. They are followed by a long string of horned beasts of every age, sex, and colour, the rear being brought up by a bevy of matronly old cows, their young calves staggering along beside them. Behind all, and riding in a cloud of dust, from which issue from time to time the reports of their long heavy whips, come some of the men who left us in the morning, their horses white with dust and sweat. From every quarter, more and more cattle stream on to the camp; the dust raised by the hoofs of a couple of thousand of half-wild cattle, flies in clouds; and the noise of bellowing becomes almost deafening. All our party having reassembled, we let our tired horses go, and catch and saddle the fresh ones. The work of drafting out the cattle we want to take home to the station, fat bullocks and cows for market, calves that require branding, and stock strayed from other "runs," has now to begin; and for it we have reserved the seasoned stock-horses, old stagers that know their work, and are used to "cutting out." We send men to ride round the

main body of the cattle, and keep them on the "camp;" we cut off a few quiet cows from the rest, and drive them a quarter of a mile or so to windward of the herd, where we leave them, well in sight of the others, with a horseman in charge of them. Presently, four or five of the most experienced hands ride quietly in, among the moving parti-coloured mass, select each man his beast, and dodge them through and among the rest, until they arrive at the edge of the herd. Then, a sudden rush, and the bullock is separated from his companions; in vain he gallops, in vain he twists and dodges to regain the mob. Man and horse keep close to his quarter, between him and his mates, edging him nearer and nearer at every turn to the quiet cattle on the plain. Perhaps he wheels short round upon the horse, and tries to use his horns; but the wary nag is not to be caught, turns shorter still, and the rider's heavy stock-whip cracks hard and sharp upon the beast's hide. Out-paced and out-manœuvred, the bullock at last perceives the quiet cattle towards which the stockman is trying to drive him, cocks his ears, and trots off towards them, while the man walks his horse quietly back in search of fresh game.

It is a very lively and exciting sight. On the higher ground, half hidden by a cloud of white dust, which rises like a pillar of smoke into the bright blue sky, is a bellowing roaring assemblage of horned cattle. Wild old bullocks, wandering restlessly through the crowd, their sides ornamented with many brands and devices, their ears cut into many shapes, strike savagely with their horns at everything in their way. Anxious matronly cows bellow frantically for their calves, which run under the horses' feet, looking for their mothers. Shaggy thin-legged half-starved weaners, with a precocious look about their wizen faces, like that on the face of a London street Arab, look out for a chance to steal some milk from the mothers of more fortunate calves. Blundering young bulls and handsome sleek heifers, as yet untouched by rope or brand, and shoals of young cattle that, as though for mischief's sake, continually try to join the drafted lot where they have no business, and are hunted back by the black boys. Horsemen ride round the moving many-hued mass, from the midst of which, every now and again, the galloping beast darts out, a red-shirted stockman racing alongside him. Foiled in their efforts to re-enter the main body, the selected cattle go trotting about, with heads up, across the level space between the larger and the smaller herd. Horsemen are galloping far and near in all directions, cattle are bellowing, men shouting; all is sunshine, heat, dust, noise, and motion. The work goes on, until the sun is past the zenith, and horses and men become of one uniform dust colour.

Three hundred head or so have been cut out, and the sharp eyes of the men on the camp can find no more of the cattle they require. The horsemen gather in a group; the cattle, no longer kept together by the men who have been riding round them, draw slowly off the camp; we all adjourn to the neighbouring swamp, in which there is still a little water left, among the polygonum bushes at the bottom of it, to give our tired horses a drink. The water is very bad, but seems delicious to us, hoarse as we are with shouting and parched with dust. Then the drafted cattle are sent home to the station: three men in charge of them, to be shut up in the stock-yard to-night, and taken out in the morning to feed under strict surveillance. The rest of us, after lighting our pipes, ride slowly off in a contrary direction, to bivouac again to-night, and renew to-morrow, on a different part of the run, the operations of to-day.

HOPE RASHLEIGH.

There never was a prouder nor more indulgent father than John Rashleigh. A haughty, dry, and saturnine man, with few weaknesses and fewer affections; all the tenderness of his nature having concentrated itself on his daughter. The love which had been only partially bestowed upon the wife was lavished on the child with an excess that knew no bounds.

It was unfortunate for Hope that she was left motherless at the very time when maternal care and guidance were most needed. A wilful, high-spirited girl, clever, beautiful, and perilously fascinating, ran but a poor chance of coming to good, without some firm hand to guide and govern her; but when she was just thirteen Mrs. Rashleigh died, and Hope was given up to the worst training a girl can have — the over-indulgence of a father. Father, servants, masters (when she chose to accept lessons, which she did sometimes out of the weariness of idleness), the half housekeeper, half companion, bowed to her. No one was found to oppose her; even Grantley Watts put himself under her feet with the rest, and thought himself honoured if she condescended to treat him like a slave, made him fetch and carry and work for her, and attend upon her every whim and caprice. She never thanked him, and she rarely rewarded him even with a smile; though sometimes she did; and then he forgot all but that smile, and thought himself richer than many a king standing on the threshold of his treasure-chamber.

Hope and Grantley Watts were cousins of a far-away kind; though he was that most miserable of all things—a poor relation brought up on charity, therefore in no wise her equal according to the canons of society. Still, the equality of blood was between them however great the inequality of means; and the equality of nature as well; save that the balance of nobleness hung to Grantley's side, who had been spared the dangers which beset a spoiled and pampered child, and whose virtues therefore had a better chance and freer room for growth.

He was a fine, manly, noble-hearted fellow this Grantley, with two special characteristics, good temper and an invincible sense of honour.

His cousin, John Rashleigh, was substantially kind to him. He housed him, and had educated him liberally; but for the more immaterial kindnesses of tender look or gracious word, of indulgences granted by the generosity of love, of gifts or pleasures beyond strict deserving, the boy had grown up absolutely without them. Hope, too, had used towards him all the insolence which girls of a certain type are so fond of showing towards young men, no matter what their degree; adding to this haughtiness the tyranny and domination to which every one within her sphere was forced to submit. But Grantley accepted all her girlish impertinences with unwavering good humour and that patience of the stronger which is so large and calm; never seeming to see what would have fired many another youth to saucy retaliation, but, always master of himself, returning good for evil, smiles for jeers, obedience for command, and service for ingratitude. And yet he was not mean spirited.

Hope was now seventeen—Grantley two years older. She was a tall, slight, fair girl, with dark eyes to which straight brows and long lashes gave a mingled expression of fire and softness; her hair, which waved in broad undulations and was of a pure golden brown, was thrown back from her face and left loose and wandering about her neck; her lips were full and finely curved; but the general tone of her face and manners altogether was that of pride and self will, with an underflow of loving warmth if it could but be reached. As yet no one had reached it save her father, and even he was not loved in proportion to the love he gave, as is the sorrowful law of life. The universal feeling in the neighbourhood where she lived was, that Miss Hope Rashleigh wanted her master, and that a little stiff tribulation would be the making of her.

Hope had one quality which counted much in the blotting out of her sins: she was generous. In this she went beyond her father by many degrees, for he was only just, and when he was more than just he was proud and bestowed from ostentation rather than from generosity—as a duty owing to his own dignity and condition, not as the duty of kindliness to others. She, on the contrary, gave from the affluence of her nature, because making presents was a pleasure in itself, and alleviating suffering her instinct. No one who came to her was ever sent away empty handed; and if she was more than usually exacting and impatient with her servants, she healed their wounds so liberally that they all said "a bad day with Miss Hope was equal to a month's wages any time."

This was the only point on which her father ever checked her. He made her a liberal allowance, more than sufficient for her own wants had they been double what they were; but as she was for ever behindhand, owing to her bounties, he had to make up her deficiencies at the end of the quarter; vowing that this should be the last time, and that he must positively, for her own sake, let her learn the value of money. But the last time had never come yet.

At last Grantley's was offered an Indian appointment, which, though of small value in the beginning, promised well, and was sure to lead to a favourable future if he were found capable and steady. There was no question of doubt or hesitation in the matter; he must go, willing or unwilling. Penniless young men, kept long idle at home, are generally glad enough of good appointments where they can make their fortunes: but his cousin noticed that he turned deadly pale as he spoke, and Hope caught a look such as she had never seen in his eyes before, and which sent all the blood in a thick wave of mingled passions round her heart.

A few days before Grantley's departure, Hope was walking in the shrubbery by the long field. She had been rather dull of late. Hope Rashleigh could get out of temper. Presently, up the long path where she was walking came Grantley with his gun and his game-bag. He, too, was dull. Glad and grateful as he was for that Indian appointment, he had never been quite himself since it had been made; though his gravity and preoccupation were perhaps only natural in a thoughtful youth on the eve of entering the world on his own account, and with all his future depending on himself alone. As he came nearer, Hope raised her eyes from the book she had been reading; at least not exactly reading, since she was holding it upside down; and as she looked she coloured.

"I am going to get you a partridge, Miss Hope," said Grantley, stopping for a moment as he came near to her. He always called her Miss Hope.

"I dare say the partridges will be safe enough from your gun," said Hope, insolently. But she did not look at him as she spoke; and somehow her insolence seemed a little put on and forced.

"Oh! that is scarcely fair," said Grantley, smiling. "I may be good for very little, Miss Hope, but I am a pretty fair shot."

"At least you say so of yourself. I never believe boasters," answered Hope, carelessly.

"Is knowing an insignificant thing like this, a bit of skill which any one can attain by practice—and not being proud of it, boasting?" Grantley asked, gently.

"I do not condescend to argue with you," cried Hope, shaking back her hair. "You are very rude to contradict me."

"I do not wish to contradict you, Miss Hope," replied Grantley, in a sweet grave voice; "but you must not think me rude because I do not like you to have a mean opinion of me, and try to set you right."

The blood rushed over Hope's face, and she turned away abruptly.

"I am going away—perhaps for ever," then said Grantley after a short pause, speaking in a low voice but not looking at his cousin—looking down instead, occupied about the stock of his gun which just then needed an extra polish;

"and I should like to ask you one question before I go—may I?"

"I suppose my permission or refusal would not count for much if you have made up your mind," said Hope, she too looking down, folding the leaves of her book a little unconsciously.

"I think it would, Miss Hope. I think I have always been careful to obey your every wish, so far as I could; and I have never wilfully displeased you, believe me."

"It is a pity, then, that you should have done it so often without your will," said Hope.

"That is just what I want to ask," replied Grantley. "Why have you been so constantly displeased with me, Miss Hope? No one has tried more earnestly than I to please and obey you—I can truly say from the very first years of my life here—why is it, then, that you hate me as you do? What have I ever done to make you hate me? If I only knew! if I only had known for all these years!"

"Hate you?" she cried quickly, turning full round upon him and raising her eyes with a strange look into his face. Then she dropped them again, and said coldly, "I did not know, Mr. Watts, that I had ever honoured you enough to hate you. I have scarcely taken so much notice of you as to warrant you in saying that."

Grantley turned pale. "Forgive me," she said, sadly; "this has been again one of my unlucky blunders."

"I think," she said, with a gentler look than usual, "we might as well drop this conversation. I do not see to what good it can possibly lead; and giving offence and then making apologies has always seemed to me a very childish way of passing the time; and we are not children now," she continued, with girlish pride. "It has not been your fault, Grantley, if you have been tiresome and disagreeable." But as she looked up when she said this, and smiled all radiantly and sweetly, the words had no sting in them, and were indeed more coaxing than impertinent. "I dare say you have not meant to be unpleasant, and so I have forgiven you. But you had better go now and look after the partridges. I promise you, if you get one, to take it specially to myself; and I am sure that will be honour enough!" And she laughed one of her sweet, clear, precious laughs, as rare as precious, which most people—and Grantley among them—prized as much as they would have prized the loving favour of a queen.

"Ah, Miss Hope!" he said very tenderly, his handsome face, bronzed and flushed, looking down upon her with such infinite love and admiration, "you have too much power over your fellow-creatures. It is good neither for you nor for them."

"It is very good for both them and me," she said. "It keeps them in their proper places, and makes me able to——" She hesitated.

"To what?" said Grantley, coming a step nearer.

"To keep mine," she answered coldly, drawing herself away.

He sighed, and seemed to wake as from a dream. "Well, I must go," he then said. "Good-by, Miss Hope; I will get you a bird if I can; and remember that you have promised to accept it specially for yourself."

"You need not give yourself the trouble," she answered disdainfully; she, too, seeming to shake herself clear from a pleasant dream. "I have not the slightest wish that you should get me one, Mr. Watts, or indeed that you should think of me at all." Saying which she walked away, and left him without another word.

He looked after her as she slowly disappeared, and then he struck off into the fields for one of the last days of partridge shooting he was to have in the old country. But Hope, going deeper into the shrubbery, flung herself down on the moss at the roots of the trees and burst into a passionate flood of tears, hating and despising herself the while.

When Grantley returned in the evening he had only one bird in his bag; though game was plentiful this year and he was acknowledged to be a first-rate shot. His cousin, John Rashleigh, rallied him unmercifully, and Hope said in her most disdainful way: "I thought the coveys would be tolerably safe, Mr. Watts!" But he only laughed, and admitted that he was a muff and not worth his salt—that powder and shot were thrown away upon him—and that he would make but a sorry figure in India where men *could* shoot—with other jeerings playful or bitter as they might be; simply saying, "Well, Miss Hope, you must have it some morning for breakfast when I am gone; it is the last I shall shoot, and I should like you to have it."

To which answered Hope indifferently: "You are very good, Grantley, but I dare say Fido will be the only one to benefit by your last bag; I do not suppose I shall even see the creature."

Grantley coloured; and Mr. Rashleigh himself thought she might have been more gracious just on the eve of the poor lad's departure, when perhaps they might never see him again; and after all, though he was a poor relation, and had very properly never forgotten that, or gone beyond the strictest line of demarcation, yet he had been many years in the house now, and Hope was very young when he came, so that if she had even considered him almost as a brother, no great harm would have been done; and so on; his heart unconsciously pleading against his child's untoward pride in favour of his dependent.

Perhaps it was some such half discomfort—it could not be said to be conscious displeasure—that made him refuse Hope's request that evening. As usual, she was out of funds; and she had a special need for money at this moment. She wished to help poor Anne Rogers down in the fever, with her husband in the hospital, and her children destitute, and she knew that her father would not give them a penny; for the man had been convicted of poaching, and Anne herself did not bear the most un-

blemished character, and had seen the inside of the county jail more than once in her lifetime. But these counter-pleadings did not influence Hope; and she thought only of the suffering family, which she could help, and would, if she had the money. Then she wanted to make Grantley a present before he went away, and she did not want her father to know of it; though perhaps she would have been puzzled to explain why she wished to keep such a trivial matter secret. She had never given him anything, not even a flower, not even a book; and he was almost the only person within her sphere so passed over; but now, when he was going to leave for ever, she would give him something as a remembrance—something that would make him think of her when he was away. Poor, proud Hope, come then at last to this!

She knew that her father had money in the house, when she went into the library to speak to him; for she saw him put a twenty-pound note in his desk yesterday, which was just the sum she wanted, and indeed was on the point of asking for then. She would have got it had she done so; but to-day the vane had shifted, and for the first time in his life he refused her, and so sternly and positively, that, as much in surprise as anger, she gave up the point at once. But with a sullen flush of pride and determination on her face, which he did not see, sitting as he was towards the light while she stood in the shadow. And then she left the room in stately silence; too proud to coax even her father after a refusal so harshly made; though, had she coaxed him as Hope could when she chose, the whole thing would have been at an end, and John Rashleigh would have yielded. She was but a spoiled child, remember, whose faults had been fostered by the injudicious training of her life.

The distress of poor Anne Rogers pressed upon her. Unused to opposition and in a mood more than ordinarily excitable, everything became exaggerated, and she laid awake through the night in a state bordering upon mania, feeling herself to be a coward and a murderess in not executing the righteousness of will, and taking from her father what he would not but ought to freely give. Was not humanity before mere obedience? Was she to let a fellow-creature die rather than take what could be spared so well, and what she had the right to demand? Yes, by right; her father's money was hers as well, if not by law yet by moral justice, and if he made a cold and churlish steward, it was her duty to supply his defects, and to let the poor benefit by his superfluities. All the wild reasonings of a wilful mind aiding the impulses of a generous heart passed through her brain that night, and when she rose in the morning it was with the determination to do her own will, and defy her father's.

John Rashleigh was a magistrate, and to-day was market-day at Canstow, the town near which they lived, where the magistrates always assembled in the upper room of the town-hall and dispensed law, if not justice, on the offenders. His absence gave Hope the opportunity she wanted. Very quietly and very deliberately she unlocked his desk, and took from it the twenty-pound note. But though the act was shameful, she had no perception that she was doing wrong, beyond the consciousness of self-will and disobedience, which did not trouble her much—which, on the contrary, she had reasoned herself into considering the meritorious exercise of a better judgment and a nobler motive.

"Grantley, change this for me," she said, giving him the note.

"I cannot change it myself, Miss Hope," he answered, "but I will get it done for you in Canstow; I am going over there directly."

"Change it where you like," she answered carelessly. "I want the money as soon as you can give it to me, that is all; and Grantley, do you hear? if papa asks you, do not tell him that I gave you the note to get changed."

"Very well, I will not," said Grantley, who, suspecting nothing wrong saw nothing odd in her request; and who indeed felt not a little flattered that she should have made a secret with him on any matter. So, full of pleasant feeling, he rode over to Canstow, where he changed the note, and bought various things with the money, partly for Hope according to her orders, and partly for himself; not at Hope's charge it must be understood, the squaring of accounts having to come afterwards. And among other things, he bought a certain camp apparatus for himself at Tell's the ironmonger's, for which he paid with the note in question—that being the largest shop and the largest purchase.

Now it so happened that Mr. Rashleigh went to pay his bill at this same ironmonger's to-day. He took a cheque which he had just received in the market-place from one of his tenants who owed him half a year's rent for his farm; and to save himself the trouble of going to the bank—banking hours indeed being over—he gave it to Tell, receiving the surplus change. Among which change came his own twenty-pound note. Passing it through his fingers, and looking at the number to take down in his pocket-book, he recognised it as that left in his desk at Newlands. He knew the number, and a certain private mark which he always made on his bank-notes, thereby rendering them doubly "branded;" and he knew that no one could have obtained possession of it lawfully.

"Where did you get this, Tell?" he asked.

"Mr. Grantley, sir," said Tell. "He changed it here not half an hour ago, and ordered this patent camp apparatus," showing the young man's purchase.

"Mr. Grantley Watts?" cried John Rashleigh, flushing up; "he changed this note here?"

"Yes, sir; I hope no mistake, sir—nothing wrong?" asked the ironmonger, a little anxiously.

"No, no, nothing! I was surprised, that was all; no, Tell, nothing wrong."

But his face was more truthful than his lips; and Tell saw plainly that something was very far wrong in spite of his denial, and that young Mr. Grantley was in for it, whatever he had been doing. He did not suspect anything very bad. Canstow was by no means an immaculate place, and there were offences and offenders enough as times went; but it was not to be supposed that a young gentleman like Mr. Watts had stolen a bank-note out of his cousin's drawer. Young gentlemen living in grand houses do not do such things; crime passes them by somehow; and the police exercise their functions very much in proportion to the yearly income. The utmost the man imagined was that Grantley had broken into a sum which Mr. Rashleigh had desired him to keep intact; and, as it was well known that the master of Newlands had a high temper of his own and liked to be obeyed, that was quite enough to put him out, and to make his face grow so white and his thin lips so pale. At all events, wherever the fault lay, the lad was in for it, thought Tell; not without a kindly feeling of regret for the evil hour at hand. For Grantley was a general favourite in Canstow, and most people there wished him well.

Home came John Rashleigh in a frame of mind more easily imagined than described. Things had gone crossly with him for the last few hours; and John Rashleigh was not the man to bear with the crossness of circumstance patiently. Hope's extravagance had annoyed him; partly because some other of his money matters had gone wrong at the same time; and, like most proud men, the merest suspicion of possible embarrassment galled him terribly; then he was sorry at Grantley's leaving, and vexed with himself for being sorry; for what better could a poor relation do? and if he had made himself useful, so that he, John Rashleigh of Newlands, felt that he should be "quite lost" without him, why, that was only the lad's duty and what ought to have been, and he was worse than absurd to feel the least pain at his going. Then the magistrate's business had been worrying him to-day; and he had been on one side of an opinion and his brothers had been on the other, and he had been forced to give in; which had annoyed him not a little; so that, when added to all this accumulation of disturbing influences was the sudden conviction that he had been robbed, and that too by the boy he had loved and cherished more than he had ever openly acknowledged, we can understand in what a whirlwind of fiery wrath he rode full speed through Canstow and up to Newlands, not ten minutes after Grantley had returned.

"Grantley!" he called out as soon as he entered, and still standing in the hall; "Grantley Watts, where are you?"

"Here, sir," said Grantley coming out of the drawing-room, where he had been giving Hope an account of his proceedings, and emptying his pockets of her commissions.

"Where did you get that twenty-pound note you changed just now at Tell's?" shouted John Rashleigh.

Grantley was silent.

"Come, sir, I want an answer!" cried his cousin. "Looking down and keeping a demure silence will not suit me; I want a simple answer to a straightforward question. Where did you get that twenty-pound note from? I left it in my desk when I went to Canstow to-day, and my desk was locked; whoever got it forced the lock or opened it with a false key. It was either you or some one else. Who was it, Grantley?"

Grantley still made no answer; the truth was beginning to break upon him.

"I do not think any one in my household would do such a thing; two hours ago I should not have thought that *you* would have done it; and even yet, suspicious as the whole circumstance is, even yet I will accept any explanation that will clear you, else I must hold you responsible for the theft."

"I did not steal it. I have committed no theft," said Grantley, looking straight into his cousin's eyes.

"Oh! you may dislike the word, but that I do not care for," said Mr. Rashleigh, disdainfully. "I have always remarked that people shrink more from a word than a deed, and think themselves especially ill-used if called by the name of their crime. If you are not a thief, what are you then? If you did not steal it, how did you get it?"

"I did not steal it," was all that Grantley could say, repeating himself monotonously.

John Rashleigh was an impatient man as well as a proud and high-tempered one. At Grantley's second asseveration he raised his hand and struck the youth across the face.

"Coward!" he said, "have you not even the bad courage of crime? Dare you not confess what, by confession, would have been only a fault? If you had told me frankly how and why you had come to do such a thing, I could have understood it as a boyish liberty, and have forgiven it, but now I have only one way of dealing with it—as a crime."

When he struck him Grantley involuntarily raised his own hand; but a thought came across him, and he retreated a step or two and dropped his guard.

"It takes the remembrance of all you have done for me, Mr. Rashleigh, and more than even this, to make me able to bear your insults!" he said, excitedly, his boyish face convulsed with contending passions.

His voice, harsh and broken as it was, had somehow a different ring in it to that of guilt, and Mr. Rashleigh had not been a magistrate for so many years, and accustomed to all shades of criminals, not to know something of the human voice, and what it betokened under accusation. Grantley's startled him—so did the proud flushed face with the honest eyes looking so frankly, and the indignation rather than fear upon it—and made him half afraid that he had been too hasty. But men

of his character do not long doubt themselves for good or evil; and while that one broad fact remained unexplained—how did Grantley get possession of money left locked up in his desk?—he was in his right to suppose that he had stolen it, and common sense and the law were on his side.

"Tell me how you came by it," he then said in a somewhat gentler tone; "if I have done you wrong, boy, I am sorry for it, and we will not bear malice; but tell me how you got that note."

"I cannot, sir," said Grantley, his heart swelling.

"You will not, you mean, you young fool!" said Mr. Rashleigh, contemptuously.

"I cannot," he repeated.

"Then you will not be surprised if I send for the police? Here, Lewis. Lewis! come here! The thing must be thoroughly sifted, Grantley; and if you are guilty I am sorry for the exposure you have brought on yourself. It is your own folly to let things come to such a pass, when they can never be mended again!"

"To send for the police will not make matters much worse for me," replied Grantley; "the servants have heard all that has passed, and my character will be none the blacker now for a public charge."

"At least we shall get to the truth then," said Mr. Rashleigh; "which will be so much gained."

"No, sir," Grantley replied, firmly, "I shall not tell you even then where I got that money from, or how I came by it!"

All this while the drawing-room door had been standing half open, with Hope close to it, listening to what was passing. A whole world of feelings had possessed her by turns—fear of her father, fear for Grantley, and shame at the false position in which her self-will and cowardice together had placed him—something, too, that was more than admiration at the constancy with which he had borne such pain and indignity that he might keep faith with her, and a kind of dawning idea that what she had done had been after all a sin and a dishonour, and that confession would degrade her for ever—all these thoughts and feelings passed through her mind by turns, and held her motionless and silent; with ever the bitter recollection that Grantley was but a poor relation at the best, and that the distance between them was immeasurable, running like a sorrowful refrain to each. But when her father spoke of giving him in charge, and called to the servant, then she hesitated no longer. Throwing the door wide open she came out into the hall.

"*I* took the money, papa," she said boldly; and as she spoke she laid her hand in Grantley's, the first time that she had ever willingly done so.

"Hope!" exclaimed her father, "are you mad? *You* took that money? *You?*"

"Yes, papa," she answered quite steadily; "you refused to give it to me when I asked you for it yesterday, and I took it this morning. I wanted it, and you ought to have given it to me."

"If I had thought that to refuse it would have made you capable of stealing it, Hope, I would not have hesitated a moment," said the father, sternly.

"I do not call it stealing," said Hope, defiantly. "It was only taking what I had a right to. I unlocked your desk with my own key, and gave the note to Grantley to get changed."

John Rashleigh turned fiercely against the youth. "How dare you, sir, abet my child in her folly?" he exclaimed, passionately. "What was folly in her, and excusable, considering how I have always humoured her and acceded to her wishes, and remembering that after all she is a mere child still, was downright wickedness and dishonour in you. And how do I know but that you instigated her to it? How do I know but that it was your doing in reality, and she but the innocent tool of your cunning schemes? You bought a precious gimcrack for yourself, and paid for it with my money. I tell you, Grantley, the whole thing looks too black yet for your whitewashing."

"Grantley accounted to me for that camp thing," said Hope. "Do I not tell you, papa, that it was my own doing from first to last? Grantley did not know where I got the note from. I only asked him to get it cashed for me. But I asked him not to tell you that I had done so, because I was afraid you would be angry with me, and I meant to tell you when you were kind again." This she said coaxingly.

"I could not break my word to Miss Hope," said Grantley in a low voice, but firmly. "Yet I should have thought, Mr. Rashleigh, that you would have known me too well to have suspected me of such a thing as this. What Miss Hope had the right to do was another matter, but it would have been a theft in me; and men"—(here Mr. Rashleigh smiled a little satirically) "do not become thieves all at once. Yet I do not think you have ever seen much want of honour in me!"

"I will not have that tone taken," said Mr. Rashleigh, harshly. "You have done ill, Grantley, and it is absurd to attempt to give yourself the airs of injured innocence, and as if you had the right to blame me because I suspected what was so entirely suspicious. And what do I know yet? I have no proof; only your own word and Hope's assertion, which, for aught I know, may be merely her generous desire to get you out of a perilous position by taking the blame on herself. I can scarcely believe her guilty. To have gone into my room in my absence—unlock my desk—take the money I had refused her only a few hours ago—to steal—I cannot believe it! I will not! You have been at the bottom of it, Grantley; you have had some hand in it!"

"Now, papa, how can you go on so?" cried Hope, thoroughly frightened. "Do I not tell you that Grantley is innocent, and that I have been the only one to blame? What more can I say to convince you?"

"It is not an easy matter to convince me that my child has committed a theft," said John Rashleigh, gravely, and turning away his head.

"I did not think of it as a fault at the time, dear papa," she cried, flinging herself into his arms. "I wanted it for poor Anne Rogers, chiefly; I did not want it for myself. Forgive me, dear, dearest papa, for having been so disobedient and wilful, and do not blame or accuse Grantley any more! I am the only one to blame, and he has been far nobler than I deserved." Here she burst into tears, and buried her face in her father's breast. "Won't you forgive me, dear papa?" she sobbed again after a short pause, kissing his cheek which her tears made almost as wet as her own.

John Rashleigh could not resist this. Hope had never yet been unforgiven even when she had not shown contrition, and the unusual softness of her mood to-day could meet with nothing but the most fervent response.

"Do not cry, Hope! Dry your eyes, child!" he said, tenderly. "There, there! Let us have no more about it. I quite believe you, and I quite believe that you did not know you were doing anything wrong, and that you were only thoughtless and impulsive, as usual. And as for you, boy" (to Grantley), "I am sorry that I accused you so hastily; so, shake hands, and think no more about it. You cannot expect me to say more than that I am sorry," he added pleasantly, as Grantley still hesitated. The blow on his cheek yet stung, and it was rather early days to take the hand which had struck him. "No gentleman can want more than an apology, and a father can only express his regret to a son; so shake hands, boy, and let us all forget what has been a very painful misunderstanding."

That word did what the feeling had failed to do. Grantley grasped his cousin's hand warmly; he had conquered all his boyish pride and manly indignation by the simple name of father.

"I have made you suffer, Grantley," said Hope, as her father left them; and again she laid her hand in his.

"I would have borne more than this for your sake, Miss Hope," he answered, pressing her hand between both of his, and looking at her lovingly—she not haughty and disdainful as usual, but downcast, bashful, and repentant.

"I do not know what we shall do without you, Grantley," she then said very gently; and as she spoke she turned pale, and he felt her hand trembling in his.

"Oh! you will soon forget me. I have so often displeased you, you will be glad to get rid of me," Grantley answered.

"I do not think we shall," said Hope, in a low voice. And then there was a moment's silence.

All this time they were standing with their hands clasped in each other's in the hall which had just been so noisy and heated with the late storm passing through.

"You have not displeased me; it is I who have been ill tempered," Hope continued, in a still lower voice, still softer and richer in its tones. "I ought to ask you for forgiveness, Grantley, before you go, for I have often behaved so badly to you."

"You must not do that," he exclaimed hastily, and his eyes filled up with tears. "I could not bear that, Miss Hope. I cannot bear to hear you even blame yourself for anything."

"Grantley!" she said; and then she stopped and said no more.

Still with her hand in his, still looking down on her as she stood with bent head and lowered eyelids before him, he drew just a shade nearer to her.

"You spoke?" he asked.

She laid her other hand on his arm.

"I am much obliged to you for all that you have done for me these many years," she said, almost in a whisper.

The words were formal but the voice and tone were not; the downcast eyes, the parted lips, the cheeks now crimsoning and now paleing, the heaving breast, the pride swept away beneath the swell of this unusual tenderness and girlish gratitude, all told of something deeper and warmer stirring in that impetuous heart than what those quaint, formal words expressed.

"Do not say that you are obliged to me for anything, dear Miss Hope," said Grantley, himself scarcely able to speak; "it has been honour enough to me to be allowed to serve you."

"No one has ever done so much for me," she said.

"Because no one ever" He stopped in his turn, and said no more; then, after a pause, he went on: "I have done nothing for you unwillingly, Miss Hope. If you had asked me at any time to give you my life I would have done it as freely as I would have given you a flower. I have had but one object—that of serving and obeying you; and I have had but one desire—that of pleasing you. I have done the first the best way I could if I have failed in the last sadly. But I want you to remember me when I am in India," he went on to say, "and to remember me with as little dislike as you can; and I am so glad of to-day, for the last thing you will have to remember of me will be my faith to you."

The tears were swelling in her eyes, as in his.

"I shall never forget to-day," she said gently, "nor how good you have always been to me, dear Grantley."

"I am glad you can say that, dear Miss Hope. I am glad I am going to India too, though I shall never see you again; for if I stayed in England I should only fall out of favour again, and then I should have the pain of seeing you hate me more than ever, perhaps."

By this time the tears were running down her face.

"I have never disliked you, Grantley," she said; "I have pretended to do so, but it was

mere pretence; and I have tried, but I could not. I like you better than you like me, Grantley—a great deal."

"Hope!"

What was it? What happened? What madness took him? Neither of them ever knew, boy and girl as they were; but Hope found herself clasped to his heart, with her arm round his neck, and their flushed, wet, youthful faces laid against each other.

But they were not in smooth water yet, and had something more formidable before them than even their own misunderstanding and childish blindness had been. Though John Rashleigh might forgive a girlish freedom like that of which Hope had been guilty, it was by no means certain that he would forgive this far graver sin. The light of his eyes and the pride of his heart, she for whom lords and princes would not have been too good, to give herself away at sixteen to a poor relation! Hope knew all the trial to be passed through. It must be met, however, and that at once, unless she and Grantley would undertake a clandestine correspondence—for which the one was too proud and the other too honest; or unless they would give up each other—which neither would hear of. What she anticipated came to pass, in even exaggerated form. The father was furious; violent beyond anything she had dreamed possible; but, girl as she was, she was firm, and Grantley would not yield her so long as she would hold to him.

Then came that terrible collision of two wills equal in strength, and the battle of love and pride which tears a man's very soul. Look which way he would, there was no comfort for John Rashleigh; and refusal or consent was equally madness and despair. But he must decide. The proud man had to balance with the father; and eventually the father won the day. Yet he would not consent to the marriage for many years even after they had come to riper age than what is generally held ripe enough; and when he did—when Grantley came back from India with a character and repute of his own, and his cousin found that both poor relation and daughter had not swerved a hair's breadth from their young loves, and were minded to marry without his consent if it could not be with—even then, when forced to yield, Grantley found his roses decidedly not without thorns. His sweetness of temper though conquered before the end came; and when John Rashleigh was dying, he confessed that Grantley had been the best son, and the dearest, father ever had; and that now, when the things of this world were slipping away from him and he was beginning to learn their emptiness, he was glad that Hope had married one who, by his better influence, had made her a nobler and a gentler woman.

"But you were a thief after all, my boy, and stole a greater treasure than a paltry bank-note," he said lovingly, not an hour before he died.

MODERN TORTURE.

We publish the following letter, as an act of justice. We do not observe, however, that it contradicts any statement to which this Journal has given circulation.*

TO THE EDITOR.

Sir,—An article headed Modern Torture appeared on the 10th of June in number 320 of All the Year Round, at page 463, being a sort of abstract of Rückel's work, entitled Sachsens Erkebung und das Zuchthaus zu Waldheim.

I trust you will be good enough to complete this article by mentioning, in your periodical, that the Saxon government has published a declaration in the official paper, the Dresden Journal, to the effect that it disdains to prosecute the author, or take any legal proceedings against his book, preferring to leave the verdict on it to the sound common sense of the Saxon people.

This individual, after having fought at the barricades against the government, whose paid servant he was at the time, was convicted for sedition, and received, through the royal grace, first his life, and, at a later period, the remission of his commuted sentence. He now seeks to make capital of his imprisonment by the publication of a sensation romance.

In conclusion, I may add that the Prussian press loudly predicted the confiscation and prohibition of the work by the Saxon government.

This confiscation and prohibition have indeed taken place in Prussia, but not in Saxony.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

E. P. de Colquhoun,

Aulic Councillor of H.M. the King of Saxony.

* See page 463 of the last volume.

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Will be commenced in No. 335, for September 23rd, in addition to HALF A MILLION OF MONEY, by Amelia B. Edwards, which will be continued from week to week until completed.

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HALF A MILLION OF MONEY.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "BARBARA'S HISTORY."

CHAPTER XXXVII. MR. KECKWITCH PROVES HIMSELF TO BE A MAN OF ORIGINAL GENIUS.

A THRILL of virtuous satisfaction pervaded Mr. Keckwitch's respectable bosom at the discovery of Elton Lodge, Slade's-lane, Kensington. He had gained the first great step, and gained it easily. The rest would be more difficult; but it would be sure to follow. Besides, he was not the man to be daunted by such obstacles as were likely to present themselves in an undertaking of this kind. They were obstacles of precisely that nature which his slow, dogged, cautious temperament was best fitted to deal with; and he knew this. Perhaps, on the whole, he rather liked that there should be some difficulties in the way, that he might have the satisfaction of overcoming them. At all events, they gave an additional zest to the pursuit that he had in hand; and though his hatred needed no stimulus, Mr. Keckwitch, like most phlegmatic men, was not displeased to be stimulated.

Sufficient, however, for the day was the triumph thereof. Here was the gate of Elton House; and only to have penetrated so far into William Trefalden's mystery was an achievement of no slight importance. But the head clerk was not contented only to see the gate. He wanted to have a glimpse of the house as well; and so walked on to the bottom of the lane, crossed over, and returned up the other side. The lane, however, was narrow, and the walls were high; so that, take it from what point he would, the house remained invisible. He could see the tops of two or three sombre-looking trees, and a faint column of smoke melting away as it rose against the background of blue sky; but that was all, and he was none the wiser for the sight. So, knowing that he risked observation every moment that he lingered in Slade's-lane, he turned quickly back again towards the market-gardens, and passed out through a little turnstile leading to a foot-way shut in by thick green hedges on either side.

He could not tell in the least where this path would lead him; but, seeing a network of similar walks intersecting the enclosures in various directions, he hoped to double back, somehow or another, into the main road. In the mean while, he hurried on till a bend in the path carried him well out of sight of the entrance to Slade's-lane, and there paused to rest in the shade of an apple-orchard.

It was now about half-past six o'clock. The sun was still shining; the evening was still warm; the apple-blossoms filled the air with a delicious perfume. All around and before him, occupying the whole space of ground between Kensington and Brompton, lay nothing but meadows, and fruit-gardens, and orchards heavy with blossoms white and pink. A pleasant, peaceful scene, not without some kind of vernal beauty for appreciative eyes.

But Mr. Keckwitch's dull orbs, however feebly appreciative they might be at other times, were blind just now to every impression of beauty. Waiting there in the shade, he wiped the perspiration from his forehead, recovered his breath as he best could, and thought only of how he might turn his journey to some further account before going back to town. It was much to have discovered Elton House; but he had yet to learn what manner of life was led in it by William Trefalden. It would have been something only to have caught a glimpse through an open gate—to have seen whether the house were large or small, cheerful or dismal. He had expected to find it dull and dilapidated, with half the windows shuttered up, and the rest all black with the smoke of many years; and he did not feel inclined to go away in as much ignorance of these points as when he left Chancery-lane. Suddenly an idea occurred to him—a very bright, ingenious idea, which gave him so much satisfaction that he indulged in a little inaudible laugh, and started forward again quite briskly, to find his way out of this labyrinth of hedgerows, orchards, and cabbage-gardens.

He had not gone many yards before he came to a cross-road whence more paths branched off in every direction. Here, however, like a large blue spider in the midst of his web, stood a portly policeman, from whom Mr. Keckwitch at once learned his nearest way to Palace Gardens, and followed it. He asked for Palace Gardens this time, being anxious to emerge conveniently upon the High-street without again venturing too close to Slade's-lane in broad daylight.

Having emerged at this point, Mr. Keckwitch went into the first stationer's shop that he could see, and bought a ledger. The stationer had considerable difficulty in supplying him, for the ledger he required was of a somewhat unusual shape and size. "It must be oblong," he said, "plain ruled, and bound in red leather." He would not have it ruled off in columns for accounts, and the stationer had none that were not ruled in that manner. At last he found one that was quite plain—a mere oblong book of Bath-post paper bound in purple cloth, with scarlet leather back and corners; and with this, although it was not exactly what he wanted, Mr. Trefalden's head clerk was forced to content himself. He also bought a parallel ruler, a small bottle of ink, and a couple of quill pens, saying that he would rule the book himself.

It was now striking seven by Kensington church clock; and Mr. Keckwitch, who was not used to going without his tea, inquired his way to the nearest coffee-house, which proved to be in Church-street, close by. It was a modest little place enough; but he made himself very comfortable there, establishing himself at a table at the further end of the room, calling for lights and a substantial tea, and setting to work at once upon the ruling of his ledger. When he had done about a dozen pages, he divided each into three parts by a couple of vertical lines, and desired the waiter to bring him the London Post-Office Directory. But he did not look in it for Elton House. He had searched for that some days back, and found no mention of it. He simply opened it at KENSINGTON HIGH-STREET, page four hundred and forty-nine, and proceeded patiently and methodically to copy out its contents under the several titles of Name, Address, and Occupation. By the time that he had thus filled in some four or five pages, and finished his tea, it was half-past eight o'clock, and quite dark.

That is to say, it was quite dark in the sky overhead, but quite brilliant in Kensington High-street. That picturesque thoroughfare was lighted up for the evening. The shops blazed with gas; the pavements were crowded; there was a brass band playing at the public-house at the corner; and the very fruit and oyster stalls in front of the church were bright with lanterns. The place, in fact, was as light as at noonday, and Mr. Keckwitch, who wished to avoid observation, was naturally disturbed, and a good deal disappointed. He had, however, made up his mind to do a certain thing, and he was determined to go through with it; so he pulled his hat a little more over his eyes, put his ink-bottle and pens in the breast-pocket of his coat, tucked his ledger under his arm, and went boldly out in the direction of Slade's-lane.

He had observed a baker's shop within a few doors of the corner where the omnibus had set him down, and this shop was his present destination. He went in with the assured step of a man who is about his regular work, touched his hat to a pleasant-looking woman behind the counter, and said:

"I am going round, ma'am, for the new Directory. There's been no change here, I suppose, since last year?"

"No, sir; no change whatever," she replied.

Mr. Keckwitch opened his ledger on the counter, pulled out one of his quill pens, and drew his fat forefinger down a certain column of names.

"Wilson, Emma, baker and confectioner," said he, reading one of the entries. "Is that quite right, ma'am?"

"Fancy bread and biscuit baker, if you please, sir," replied Mrs. Wilson, "not confectioner."

"Thank you, ma'am. Fancy bread and biscuit baker."

And Mr. Keckwitch drew his pen through "confectioner," and substituted Mrs. Wilson's emendation with a business-like gravity that did him credit.

"I thought the Post-office Directory for this year was out already, sir," observed Mrs. Wilson, as he blotted off the entry, and closed his ledger.

"This is not the Post-office Directory, ma'am," said Mr. Keckwitch, calmly. "This is a new Directory of the Western and South-Western districts."

"Oh indeed! a sort of new Court Guide, I suppose?"

"Just so, ma'am. A sort of new Court Guide. Wish you good evenin'."

"Good evening, sir," replied Mrs. Wilson, as he again raised his finger half way to the brim of his hat, and left the shop; he had scarcely passed the threshold, however, when he paused, and turned back.

"I beg your pardon, ma'am, for troubling you again," he said, "but perhaps you can tell me who lives at Elton House?"

"Elton House?"

"Yes; Elton House, in Slade's-lane. I've been knocking and ringing there till I'm tired, and can get no one to come to the gate. Is it uninhabited?"

Mr. Keckwitch said this so naturally, and with such an air of ill-used respectability, that detective Kidd himself would scarcely have doubted the truth of his statement. As for Mrs. Wilson, she accepted every word of it in perfect good faith.

"Oh no," she replied, "it is not uninhabited. The name is Duvernay."

"Duvernay," repeated Mr. Trefalden's head clerk, re-opening his ledger, and dipping his pen in Mrs. Wilson's ink. "With your leave, ma'am. A foreign family, I suppose?"

"I think she is French."

"And Mr. Duvernay—can you tell me what profession to enter?"

"There is no Mr. Duvernay," said Mrs. Wilson, with an odd little cough, and a slight elevation of the eyebrows. "At least, not that I am aware of."

Mr. Keckwitch looked up with that dull light in his eyes that only came to them under circumstances of strong excitement. Mrs. Wilson looked down, and coughed again.

"Is the lady a widow?" he asked, huskily.

"I believe she calls herself a widow," replied Mrs. Wilson; "but indeed, sir, I can't say what she is."

"And there's no gentleman?"

"I didn't say that, sir."

"I beg your pardon, I thought I understood so."

"I said there was no Mr. Duvernay; and no more there is. But I don't desire to speak ill of my neighbours, and Madame's a customer."

Mr. Keckwitch shook his head solemnly.

"Dear! dear!" said he. "Very sad, very sad, indeed. A wicked world, ma'am! So little real respectability in it."

"Very true, sir."

"Then I suppose I must simply put down *Madame Duvernay*, there being no master to the house?"

"I suppose so, sir. There is no master that I have ever known of; at least, no acknowledged master."

"Still, if there is a gentleman, and he lives in the house, as I think you implied just now"

"Oh, sir, I imply nothing," said the mistress of the shop impatiently, as if she had had enough of the subject. "Madame Duvernay's doings are nothing to me; and the gentleman may be her husband for anything I know to the contrary."

"You cannot give me his name, ma'am?"

"No, sir."

"I am sorry for that. I ought to have his name if he really lives in the house."

"I cannot give it to you, because I don't know it," said Mrs. Wilson, rather more graciously. "I cannot even take it upon myself to say that he lives at Elton House. There is a gentleman there, I believe, very constantly; but he may be a visitor. I really can't tell; and it's no business of mine, you know, sir."

"Nor of mine, if he is only a visitor," replied Mr. Keckwitch, again closing his ledger, and preparing to be gone. "We take no note of visitors, but we're bound to take note of regular inhabitants. I'm very much obliged to you, ma'am—very much indeed."

"I'm sure, sir, you're very welcome."

"Thank you. A little help often goes a long way in matters of this kind; and it isn't pleasant to stand at a gate knocking and ringing for half an hour together."

"No, indeed; far from it, sir. I can't think what all the servants were about, to let you do so."

"Good evenin' once more, ma'am."

"Good evening, sir."

And Mr. Keckwitch walked out of the shop, this time without turning back again.

CHAPTER XXXVIII. DESPATCHES FROM ITALY.

"I LOVE this terrace," said Miss Colonna, "it is so like the terrace of one of our Italian houses."

"I am always glad, for that reason, when the summer is sufficiently advanced to let us put out the orange-trees," replied Lord Castletowers.

It was shortly after breakfast, and they had all strolled out through the open windows. The tide of guests had ebbed away some days since, and the party was once more reduced to its former numbers.

"Yes," said Olimpia, "the dear old orange-trees and the terra cotta vases go far to heighten the illusion—so long as one avoids looking back at the house."

"Or round upon the landscape," suggested Saxon, smiling; "for these park trees are as English as the architecture of the house. What is the style, Castletowers?"

"Oh! I don't know. Elizabethan—Tudor—English-Gothic. I suppose they all mean the same thing. Shall I cut down my poor old oaks, Miss Colonna, and plant olives and poplars in their place?"

"Yes, if you will give me the Sabine for the Surrey hills, and an Italian sky overhead."

"I would if I could—I wish it were possible," said Castletowers, earnestly.

"Nay, I always see them," replied Olimpia, with a sigh. "I see them now—so plainly!"

"But you Italians never have the mal de pays," said Saxon.

"How can you tell that, Mr. Trefalden? I think we have."

"No, no. You love your Italy; but you do not suffer in absence as we suffer. The true mal de pays runs in no blood but the blood of the Swiss."

"You will not persuade me that you love Switzerland better than we love Italy," said Olimpia.

"But I believe we do," replied Saxon. "Your amor patria is, perhaps, a more intellectual passion than ours. It is bound up with your wonderful history, your pride of blood and pride of place; but I cannot help believing that we Swiss do actually cherish a more intense feeling for our native soil."

"For the soil?" repeated Castletowers.

"Yes, for the clay beneath our feet, and the peaks above our heads. Our mountains are as dear to us as if they were living things, and could love us back again. They enter into our inner consciousness. They exercise a subtle influence upon our minds, and upon our bodies through our minds. They are a part of ourselves."

"Metaphorically speaking," said the Earl.

"Their effects are not metaphorical," replied Saxon.

"What are their effects?"

"What we were speaking of just now—the mal de pays; home sickness."

"But that is a sickness of the mind," said Olimpia.

"Not at all. It is a physical malady."

"May one inquire how it attacks the patient?" asked the Earl, incredulously.

"Some are suddenly stricken down, as if by a coup de soleil. Some fade slowly away. In either case, it is the inexpressible longing, for which there is no possible cure save Switzerland."

"And supposing that your invalid cannot get away—what then?"

"I fear he would die."

The Earl laughed aloud.

"And I fear he would do nothing of the kind," said he. "Depend on it, Trefalden, this is one of those pretty fictions that everybody believes, and nobody can prove."

"My dear Gervase," said Lady Castletowers, passing the little group as she returned to the house, "Signor Colonna is waiting to speak to you."

Colonna was leaning over the balustrade at the further end of the terrace, reading a letter. He looked up as the Earl approached, and said, eagerly,

"A despatch from Baldiserotti! Garibaldi has sailed from Genoa in the Piemonte, and Bixio in the Lombardo. The sword is drawn at last, and the scabbard thrown away!"

The Earl's face flushed with excitement.

"This is great news," said he. "When did it come?"

"With the other letters; but I waited to tell it to you when your mother was not present."

"Does Vaughan know?"

"Not yet. He went to his room when he left the breakfast-table, and I have not seen him since."

"What is the strength of the expedition?"

"One thousand and sixty-seven."

"No more?"

"Thousands more; but they have at present no means of transport. This is but an advanced guard of tried men; chiefly old Cacciatori. Genoa is full of volunteers, all eager to embark."

"I would give ten years from my life to be among them," said Castletowers, earnestly.

The Italian laid his hand caressingly upon the young man's arm.

"Pazienza, caro," he replied. "You do good service here. Come with me to my room. There is work for us this morning."

The Earl glanced towards Olimpia and Saxon; opened his lips, as if to speak; checked himself, and followed somewhat reluctantly.

CHAPTER XXXIX. A BROKEN PROMISE.

It must be conceded that Miss Colonna had not made the most of her opportunities. She had not actually withdrawn from the game; but she had failed to follow up her first great move so closely as a less reluctant player might have done. And yet she meant to act this part which she had undertaken. She knew that, if she did so, it must be at the sacrifice of her own peace, of her own womanly self-respect. She was quite aware, too, that it involved a cruel injustice to Saxon Trefalden. But with her, as with all enthusiasts, the greater duty included the less; and she believed that, although it would be morally wrong to do these things for any other end, it would be practically right to do them for Italy.

If she could not bring herself to lead this generous heart astray without a struggle—if she pitied the lad's fate, and loathed her own, and shrunk from the path that she was pledged to tread—she did so by reason of the finer part of her nature, but contrary to her convictions of duty. For, to her, Italy was duty; and when her instinctive sense of right stepped in, as it had stepped in now, she blamed herself bitterly.

But this morning's post had brought matters to a crisis. Her father's face, as he handed her the despatch across the breakfast-table, told her that; and she knew that if she was ever to act decisively, she must act so now. When, therefore, she found herself alone with Saxon on the terrace, she scarcely paused to think how she should begin, but plunged at once into her task.

"You *must* not think we love our country less passionately than the Swiss, Mr. Trefalden," she said, quickly. "It needs no mal de pays to prove the heart of a people; and when you know us better, you will, I am sure, be one of the first to acknowledge it. In the mean while, I cannot be happy till I convince you."

"I am glad you think me worth the trouble of convincing," replied Saxon.

"How should I not? You are a patriot, and a republican."

"That I am, heart and soul!" said Saxon, with sparkling eyes.

"We ought to have many sympathies in common."

"Why, so we have. The love of country and the love of liberty are sympathies in common."

"They should be," replied Olimpia; "but, alas! between prosperity and adversity there can be little real fellowship. Yours, Mr. Trefalden, is the happiest country in Europe, and mine is the most miserable."

"I wish yours were not so," said Saxon.

"Wish, instead, that it may not remain so! Wish that women's tears and brave men's blood may not be shed in vain; nor a whole people be trodden back into slavery for want of a little timely help in the moment of their utmost need!"

"What do you mean?" said Saxon, catching something of her excitement, without knowing why or wherefore.

"I mean that the work to which my father's whole life has been given is at last begun. You know—all the world knows—that Sicily is in arms; but you have not yet been told that an army of liberation is assembling in the north."

"In the north? Then the King of Sardinia"

"Victor Emmanuel is willing enough to reap the harvest watered with our blood," replied Miss Colonna, impetuously, "but he will not offer us even a hearty 'God-speed' at present. No, Mr. Trefalden, ours is an army of volunteers and patriots only—an army of young, brave, and generous hearts that love Italy and liberty, and are ready to die for what they love!"

Beautiful as she was at all times, Saxon had never seen Olimpia Colonna look so beautiful as when she spoke these words. He almost lost the sense of what she said, in his admiration of how she looked while saying it. He stammered something unintelligible, and she went on.

"Garibaldi has sailed for Palermo with an advanced guard. Volunteers are pouring into Genoa from Venice and Milan. Subscriptions are being raised on all hands—in England, in France, in Belgium, in America. A month hence, and South Italy will be free, or doubly chained. In the mean while we need help; and for that help we look to every lover of liberty. You are a lover of liberty—you are a citizen of a model republic. What will you do for us?"

"Tell me what to do, and I will do it," said Saxon.

"Nay; I might ask too much."

"You cannot ask more than I will gladly grant."

Olimpia turned her dazzling smile upon him.

"Beware!" said she. "I may take you at your word. This cause, remember, is more to me than life; and the men who enlist in it are my brothers."

Alas! for Saxon's invulnerability, and his cousin's repeated cautions! Alas! for his promises, his good resolves, and his government stock! He was so far gone, that he would have shouldered a musket and stepped into the ranks at that moment, to please Miss Colonna.

"These men," she continued, "want everything that goes to make a soldier—save valour. They are content to accept privation; but they can neither live without food, nor fight without arms, nor cross from shore to shore without means of transport. So take heed, Mr. Trefalden, how you offer more than you are prepared to give. I might say—do you love liberty well enough to supply some thousands of brave men with bread, ships, and muskets; and then, what would be your answer?"

Saxon drew a blank cheque from his purse, and laid it on the parapet against which she was leaning. He would have knelt down and laid it at her feet in open day, but that he had sense enough left to feel how supremely ludicrous the performance would be.

"There is my answer," he said.

Miss Colonna's heart gave a great leap of triumph, and the colour flashed up into her face. She took a tiny pencil-case from her watch-chain—a mere toy of gold and jewels—and hastily pencilled some figures in the corner of the cheque.

"Will you do this for Italy?" she said, in a breathless whisper.

"I will double it for *you!*" replied Saxon, passionately.

"For me, Mr. Trefalden?"

Saxon was dumb. He feared he had offended her. He trembled at his temerity, and did not dare to lift his eyes to her face.

Finding he made no answer, she spoke again, in a soft, tremulous tone, that would have turned the head of St. Kevan himself.

"Why for me? What am I, that you should do more for me than you would do for my country?"

"I—I would do anything for you," faltered Saxon.

"Are you sure of that?"

"As sure as that I"

The young man checked himself. He would have said, "as that I love you," but he lacked courage to pronounce the words. Miss Colonna knew it, however, as well as if he had said it.

"Would you jump into the sea for me, like Schiller's diver?" she asked, with a sudden change of mood, and a laugh like a peal of silver bells.

"That I would!"

"Or in among the fighting lions, like the Count de Lorge?"

"I know nothing about the Count de Lorge; but I would do for you all that a brave man dare do for a lady," replied Saxon, boldly.

"Thanks," she said, and her smile became graver as she spoke. "I think you mean what you say."

"I do. Indeed I do!"

"I believe it. Some day, perhaps, I shall put you to the proof."

With this, she gave him her hand, and he—scarcely knowing what he did, but feeling that he would cheerfully march up to a battery, or jump out of a balloon, or lie down in the path of an express train for her sake—kissed it.

And then he was so overwhelmed by the knowledge of what he had done, that he scarcely noticed how gently Miss Colonna withdrew her hand from his, and turned away.

He watched her across the terrace. She did not look back. She went thoughtfully forward, thoughtfully and slowly, with her hands clasped loosely together, and her head a little bent; but her bearing was not that of a person in anger. When she had passed into the house, Saxon drew a deep breath, and stood for a moment irresolute. Presently he swung himself lightly over the parapet, and plunged into the park.

His head was in a whirl; and he wandered about for the first half-hour or so, in a tumult of rapturous wonder and exultation—and then he suddenly remembered that he had broken his promise to William Trefalden.

In the mean while, Olimpia went up to her

father's study in the turret, and stood before him, pale and stern, like a marble statue of herself.

Colonna looked up, and pushed his papers aside.

"Well," he said eagerly, "what speed?"

"This."

Saying which, she took a pen, deliberately filled in double the sum pencilled on the margin, and laid Saxon's cheque before him on the table.

THRONED UPON THORNS.

Whoever reigns in Mexico is throned upon thorns. And why? The crop of troubles in that land was not of its own people's sowing. It was made subject centuries ago to the least liberal of European monarchies; for three hundred years bearing—as New Spain—that monarchy's name, and governed by it upon imperial principles of despotic restriction in church and state; with trade in shackles; with a dominant privileged clergy; and with unequal laws that ground the common people while they protected the nobility in every direction against burdens and responsibilities. After very many years the failure of force at the heart of that decrepid despotism enabled the fair country to shake itself free, and it broke loose into independence, with a social system formed and set by centuries of pressure in the old despotic mould. Free, but perplexed at heart, with a dominant aristocracy of priests interfused with its social system, and unwilling to abate a jot of their supremacy; overgrown also with an order of nobles unwilling to give up one of the exclusive privileges transmitted to them from the middle ages under a despotic government, to this hour mediæval in many of its traditions and its usages. Mexico then having freed itself from foreign rule, but suffering from the effects of the long tyranny, proceeded through many a throe of internal strife to put out the despotic element from its own social system. There could be no sound liberty till that was done, but it would be found difficult to do while the organised strength of the party holding undue privileges enabled it to neutralise the efforts of the people, who, in the first passionate untrained enjoyment of a hope of independence, desired to achieve for themselves a freedom like that of a great and strong republic lying on the borders of their land. During the ferment and confusion of the civil strife between those antagonist interests which had yet to be brought into accord, when every military chief or fighting adventurer, whose soul had been corrupted by the influences inherited from a long age of despotism, was ready to grasp for himself power and wealth at his country's cost—the strong neighbouring republic held out its hand in hinderment instead of help, to rend and not to rescue. Thus we had the country of a people with high aspirations towards freedom, who had yet to learn its ways, not only troubled at home by the factions of those who were privileged in days of despotic rule, and who, in the days of liberty, were fighting for retention of rights incompatible with social freedom. As long as the domestic struggle remained equal, it was preyed upon and schemed against by every self-seeking adventurer within its borders, it was attacked, also, and robbed of wide regions by the strong state of the neighbouring republicans, with irrepressible greed for the extension of their own dominion. And what if there come some trouble for the same land that shall open for it a yet lowest deep after all these deeps have been safely sounded? One of its patriots, Benito Juarez, proved strong enough to take and keep the directing influence that might have saved the state. He swept away, by a law bearing his own name, because it was of his proposing and supporting in the legislature, all the privileges that removed noble or ecclesiastic from their share in the responsibilities of all good citizens, and made them, like their neighbours, answerable to the law. He helped to give his country a free constitution; he at last made known to the body of the people wherein a reasonable liberty consists; he broke, after a long and painful struggle, the disturbing power of those who upheld evil traditions of the centuries of despotism; he was beginning to make trade free and develop the resources of the land.

But that beaten party of the priests and nobles, shorn of privileges inconsistent with the life of a free state, regarded only its own mean interests, and sank so low as to seek the restoration of its power by the ruin of its country. Joined by some foreign traders who expect payment of divers sorts of extortionate claims to be wrung under compulsion from the afflicted people; self-seeking speculators who may profit largely by thrusting out of court the scrutiny of justice—those beaten combatants for personal immunities and privileges, made false representations to a remote state under military despotism, knowing that the remote state is desirous for its own domestic reasons to find cheap and showy foreign occupation for its troops. They ascribe all the misrule of the past—misrule of their own breeding—to the native government that had just triumphed over it, and that ruled, peacefully at last, with the consent of a contented people. They stated falsely to the foreign despotism, that this native government was not ruling with consent of the people; but that a foreign army, if it were to land in war against such government, would be hailed by the people as deliverer. Victories, they said, will be easy, and they will be cheap. For this is a rich land, with silver and gold in the very earth of it, and the mines are a safe guarantee to the conqueror that his own country will be the richer rather than the poorer for the conquest. So the foreign invader was tempted to error by false hopes. The foreign army landed, and was not received as a deliverer. With no allies but the men who had failed in the struggle to retain the social system of the fifteenth in the

life of the nineteenth century, the invaders found the whole people that was to be delivered, bravely risen to retain the liberty from which it was proposed that they should have deliverance. That foreign army even began its career of glory by sustaining a defeat in battle, and was forced to raise a siege and send for succour to its home beyond the sea. The invading despotism being strong, could in due time pour in more bayonets. But even then all it could do at immense cost of life and money, was to take some towns and hold them as long as bayonets enough were in the streets. They were unable even to keep possession of the intervening country, or of town or country in much of the outlying land, where the patriot leader still remained the centre of the never-ending fight for independence.

Thus it is that a country cursed for centuries with the rule of one great European despotism, is being now plagued by another, which other has borrowed from the next worst of the despotisms a morsel of its royalty to dress and forward to the distant land as a mock emperor with a stage property throne and crown. And the domestic traitors of that land have been found to be, and have at last been treated as, the ill-conditioned curs they are, by the foreigners to whom their vain pretensions have proved as intolerable as they were to their own countrymen. And the people who are subject to that military despotism, and from whose country it has been so fatally borrowed, regret as they may the lives of their sons sacrificed and the good money that has been taken from their pockets by their master to be spent on an ill deed. That master of theirs, too, says in his heart that he has been befooled. But what is done is done, and the spilt blood must be worked up into rose-colour paint for the appeasing if not for the contenting of his army and his people.

It was the French emperor whom the defeated faction and some speculating traders blinded with false information and misled into that invasion of Mexico which has attained a nominal success represented in the getting from the house of the Austrian emperor, the loan of a royal dummy, to be dressed up as an emperor and sent to Mexico.

This act has excited the attention of the Old World and the New. Its consequences are looked forward to with interest. They cannot be remote, and a little fuller knowledge of the history of which we have just taken out the pith, may make it easier to understand them rightly when they come.

There was a rich and vigorous race in Mexico when Cortez made his famous raid of conquest nearly three hundred and fifty years ago. Their palaces equalled, said Cortez, the most beautiful in Spain; and their capital, he said, was "the most beautiful thing in the world." But though they had skilled workers in gold and silver, their currency was gold-dust in quills, silver in the form of a T, and cocoa for small change. The ancient government was an absolute monarchy tempered by privileges of the aristocracy, and with irremovable judges. The sovereign, who, when admitted as heir-presumptive, had gone through a ceremonial which included buffeting by the people as a test of patience, had, on his accession, to go through a sharp reminder of the duties incident to power. He was kept for a year or two in the temple upon short allowance of comforts for a very long reckoning of prayers and sacrifices, and, when he overslept himself, had guards near him, who pricked his legs and arms with thorns, bidding him awake, for he did not enter on his charge to sleep, but that he might watch over his people. Thus thorns were associated very early with the crown of Mexico.

The Spaniards found Mexico a federation of three kingdoms; namely, that of the Aztecs, with its capital Tenochtitlan (Mexico); that of the Acolhuans, whose king lived at Tezcuco; and the small kingdom of Tlacopan. The name of Mexico was probably derived from Mexitli, one of the names of the Aztec god of war, at the inauguration of whose temple, thirty-three years before the arrival of Cortez, seventy thousand victims—prisoners of war, criminals, and rebels, saved up in various parts of the empire—were sacrificed. Many traits of humanity were blended with this cruel superstition of the desire of the gods for blood, and the great efficacy of blood in sacrifice. In the story of the Conquest of Mexico, the Mexicans seem to have been better Christians than the Spaniards. We gladly remember the mild answer of Guatemozin to a suffering companion when their feet were rubbed with oil and roasted, to extort confessions of the whereabout of gold. The king's companion bitterly lamented and complained, to which Guatemozin only answered: "And am I taking my pleasure in a bath?" But if the Spaniards were cruel, what pluck they had! When gunpowder ran short and sulphur was wanted to make more, it was suggested that there must be sulphur in the crater of the volcano of Popocapetl. Five men were sent to see. They climbed to the top of the mountain which for the next three centuries remained inaccessible to man, as it had been before. They found at the top in the eternal snow a gulf a thousand feet deep, at the bottom of which burnt a bluish flame sending up hot pestilential vapours; they cast lots which of them should be let down by a cord to explore that fiery gulf for the sulphur; the man who drew the lot went down in a basket, found sulphur at a depth of four hundred feet, and secured his supply.

The spirit of religious intolerance, then strong in Spain, directed dealings with the Mexicans by their new conquerors. The Inquisition never was so merciless as then. Not long since had died the Grand Inquisitor Torquemada, who, besides burning in effigy many thousands who escaped his clutch, had caused the burning alive of nine thousand persons. Spain was producing an Alva, France was tend-

ing towards the massacre of St. Bartholomew, when Mexico became dependent on the Spanish crown. As the most productive of the Spanish colonies it had ample attention. At first, the natives were divided among the colonising Spaniards in simple slavery. Las Casas made his protest showing the effects of such a system, and the result was, that while in the islands it remained, in Mexico it was replaced by a system of serfdom. Groups of families, called encomiendas, were allotted for employment in specific services by Spanish soldiers, lawyers, colonists of mark, and clergy, the religious orders being, of course, endowed with a considerable wealth in these families of serfs. The system was abolished by King Charles the Third of Spain, but the root of it proved ineradicable. The same king abolished the oppressive local mayors, and divided the land into twelve larger districts, each under the care of an intendant. But the intendant was represented in each district by a "sub-delegate," who was no improvement upon the old-fashioned mayor. He was forbidden to trade, because trading would tempt to oppression, but was left to live as he could, without a salary. Deriving all his income from fees, this official created vexations of the people, oppressed the poor, acted in connivance with those who could pay him well, and thus trafficked in justice.

At the beginning of the century, in Spanish Mexico, Humboldt found the natives, miscalled Indians, protected against fraud by being made unable to contract legally for any sum above a pound, and therefore, except their caciques or nobles, who had been left free from the first, unable to thrive by trading. This was a truly Spanish notion of Protection, meant as such, though horribly oppressive. The Indians paid annual tribute, but they were not slaves, and, better off than their neighbours of Peru, they had been exempted from forced labour in the mines. The people of mixed blood, descended from Indians and whites, and a few from Indians and negroes, were classed into castes and legally degraded. They paid tribute, and, being allowed to trade with the whites, found little reason to respect them. These people of mixed race in the old Spanish American colonies — the Mestijos—are more vigorous and able than either of the pure races, Spanish or American, whence they proceed. So manifest is their superior ability, that the future of what was once Spanish America is supposed by some to await, in course of time, their fashioning.

The Indians, or what remained of the original people of Mexico, were forced by the forms of Spanish protection, and disposed by nature, to remain apart from the conquerors in villages of their own. The caciques also, though free, preferred to live with their own people as heads of the villages, and to live simply, making no dangerous display of any wealth they might possess. Not long after the conquest they were ahead of their conquerors in care of education, and founded a college for themselves in the Franciscan convent of Santiago de Tlatalolco. The first viceroy of Mexico, after Cortez, presided at its solemn inauguration; but, the Spaniards following a policy of degradation against the spirited people over whom they ruled, that college was disorganised, and the establishment of others was prevented. At the end of the last century a wealthy cacique of Puebla went to Madrid, where he spent years in vain endeavours to persuade the authorities to establish a College for Indians in his native city. Thus the native race was degraded while the half-breeds were oppressed, and the Spanish rule over Mexico was near its end when the Bishop of Michoacan reported the true state of things to the home government, saying, "What attachment to the government can there be in the Indian who is despised and degraded, who is almost without property, and without hope of bettering his condition? He is attached to social life by a tie which offers to him no advantage. Your majesty must not believe that the fear of chastisement will alone suffice to preserve peace in this country; there must be other and stronger motives. If the new laws which Spain awaits with impatience do not regulate the positions of Indians and of coloured people, the influence of the clergy, however great it may be over these unfortunate creatures, will not be able to retain them in the submission and the respect due to their sovereign."

The expected reforms never came. Even the Creoles, or Spaniards of unmixed blood but born in Mexico, had no political liberties or rights. It was not in the nature of the Spanish government to give even to Spain's own children such gifts as were enjoyed in the New World by colonists from every other land. While the English colonists were thriving by action upon principles of civil liberty, the colonists of Spain were under tutelage of a country that sought to rule absolutely by weakening and dividing those under her sway. The several colonies of Spain in America were also carefully isolated, lest they might combine to break their bonds. Nothing could be printed till it had run the gauntlet of both civil and ecclesiastical censorship; nothing about America might be printed without license of the Council of the Indies. Clavigero's inoffensive History of Mexico, written for Spain, had to be published in Italy, translated into Italian. If license had been got for its publication in Spain, special permission would have been required for the sending out of any copies to the colonies. As for works of imagination, they were contraband, as vain fiction and idle tales. Ships sailing to the colonies were required to have inscribed on their register the contents of every book they carried. Ecclesiastical and civil officers met every ship on its arrival, to inspect the books. And then came the examination by the Inquisition.

It was in the same jealous protective spirit that the home government sought to guard itself from all danger of local patriotism, by giving trust and office only to Spaniards who had been born in Spain, and placing apart, under ban of

distrust, those born in Mexico who might be suspected of particular affection for the country of their birth. The Spaniards born in Spain were separated from all others, as a ruling caste. This involved often the establishment of a division of caste between a father and his children, and cut off from children the hope of following in the steps of their fathers as servants of the state. The Creoles, taught by the priests, and not suffered so much as to see a book in which the existence of such a thing as political liberty was mentioned, could earn money by mining or domestic trade (the foreign trade was restricted by incredible absurdities of protective discipline), and they could buy with their money titles or commissions in the militia, a favourite extravagance that turned every thriving shopkeeper into a captain or colonel, who might even be seen placidly weighing out sugar in full regimentals. The only thing that the Spanish government could not discover how to do for the protection of the native Mexicans, was to root out the banana, which, it was argued, by securing food to the poor, made them lazy. As it would have required a large and very costly army of officials to secure this extirpation of food, it was proposed and desired but not accomplished.

But let the Spanish despotism do what it would, these people could not be kept to the last from hearing of the existence in the world of other desirable things than the company of priests and women, with money, titles, and fine clothes. The independence of our North American colonies, and the power and honour that came of it, could not be kept a secret. Forbidden books were brought in over the land frontier. News of the French revolution and the emotions that belonged to it could not be kept out of Mexico. Agitation was the consequence, and Spain justified increase of the commotion by the way she took for its repression. The Spanish authorities saw revolt in every effort after better knowledge, of whatever sort, and prohibited the establishment of printing offices in towns of from forty to fifty thousand inhabitants.

The growth of an indolent clergy had been so rapid, that before the middle of the seventeenth century, Philip the Fourth was prayed by the municipality of Mexico to check the indefinite increase in the number of monks and nuns, to limit the amount of property held by convents, and prevent them from acquiring more; for already they had possession of the greater part of the territorial domains, acquired by gifts or purchase. Let there be no more bishops sent from Spain, or ordained in Mexico. Already there were in the country six thousand priests who had nothing to do. And let there be fewer church holidays, promoting—rather more surely than the bananas—idleness among the people. When the Spanish yoke was about to be thrown off, ten thousand monks and nuns held property, real and personal, equal to half the value of all the real property of the country. There was also a heavy annual levy of tithes. The wealth was divided most unequally among its holders. An archbishop or bishop took between twenty and thirty thousand pounds a year. A priest of an Indian village, doing the real missionary work for which the church was founded, might get between twenty and thirty pounds a year. The great prizes were, with the rarest exception, all given to priests born in Spain; the parish priests on small pay were Mexican-born Spaniards, Creoles, and often Indians. For this reason the inferior clergy has been throughout the later history of Mexico on the side of the patriots, while the high dignitaries have upheld—reckless of Mexican interests and caring only for their own—the old disorder of things. All priests, as well as the military class, had "fueros" or extraordinary privileges which exempted them from judgment, even upon questions of debtor and creditor, before courts whose members were not of their own body. In course of time, the civil power had acquired a right of hearing criminal charges against priests, after their ecclesiastical superiors had degraded them and given them up to the secular arm; but in no case could the law proceed to judgment so effective that a bishop might not neutralise its action.

So matters stood with the Mexicans when, in the year eighteen hundred and eight, they heard that Napoleon was become master of Spain. First came, under the lead of the pure Spanish chiefs, an outburst of sympathy with the misfortunes of the outcast Bourbon. But the Mexican-born population, that had been ruled by the sole will of the sovereign, when that sovereign abdicated were without a master, and they seized then on the idea of a national sovereignty. In the capital city of Mexico the new ideas associated with this term in the states of America, and part of Europe, were become familiar, and the Ayuntamiento, or local council of Mexico, went in state to the viceroy, professing attachment to the House of Bourbon, but, in the name of New Spain, asking for the convocation of a National Assembly. The viceroy referred the question to his imperial council, the Audiencia of Mexico, and this body, composed exclusively of natives of Spain—its members being even, as a condition of their membership, forbidden to marry in Mexico—strongly resisted. But the Ayuntamiento held to its request, and the viceroy, Iturrigaray, resolved to comply with it. Whereupon he was one night seized in his bed by three hundred of the pure Spanish party, and confined with his two sons in the prisons of the Inquisition; his wife and his other children being imprisoned in a convent. An obscure soldier, who happened to be the senior among the Spanish officers, was placed in the viceroyalty, but he proved so blunt a tool that in a few months he was removed, and the Archbishop of Mexico put in his place. The archbishop, in turn, gave way to the rule of the Audiencia itself, until the arrival of a new viceroy from Spain. Meanwhile, this body of Spanish-born rulers was banishing and imprisoning influential Mexicans, exhorting Spaniards to organise them-

selves into armed juntas, and haughtily said, that while there was a cobbler in Castile or a mule in La Mancha, there would always be a ruler for America. Representations in favour of the imprisoned viceroy were met with insult. The Mexicans were thus stung into active assertion of their rights, and there was division of the land into two hostile parties of Spaniards, nicknamed "Gachupines," and of Mexicans, who were commonly called Americans, and also, from a certain convent where the Virgin, as Our Lady of Guadalupe, was worshipped as special protectress of the country, were called "Guadalupes."

Now, at this time there was a parish priest in the small town of Dolorès, a town almost entirely peopled by Indians, who loved his country, and had laboured with intelligence to help his poor parishioners. He had taught them to breed silkworms and cultivate the vine. But protectionist Spain demanded that in Mexico no wine should be drunk that had not come from the mother country; an order came, therefore, for the plucking up of the vines round about Dolorès, and they were plucked up. The parish priest, who was named Hidalgo—or, in full, Don Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla—a native of Guanaxuato, and then sixty years old, resolved that his vines should bear fruit, and good fruit. He formed plans of revolt, which were disclosed to the Spaniards when one who had joined in them, being at the point of death, told all to his confessor. There were arrests, and Miguel Hidalgo was to be arrested, but the danger, instead of unnerving him, hurried him on to immediate action. Joined by Captain Allende, a young Creole, captain of the forces in the neighbouring town of San Miguel, the parish priest of Dolorès raised the flag of independence, and down came the streams of Indians from the mountains to join in the following, as the little army of independence marched from San Miguel to Zalaga. It was the fierce crowd of an oppressed, warm-blooded people, and its march was not untainted with the cruelty of passion. Twenty thousand strong, it reached Guanaxuato, where the Spaniards refused to surrender; the town was taken, and Hidalgo would have striven in vain, if he did strive, to repress the ensuing massacre and plunder. But property of Spaniards, as a rule, was confiscated and divided by Hidalgo among his troops, and it is difficult to say whether he may not have been willing to strike terribly at once to make the stroke swift and effectual. But the Indians —the old native population—were those who fought cruelly; they had small respect even for Creoles; and their warfare, with the dread of some possible issues of it, drove many of the rich Creoles to the Spanish side. The archbishop excommunicated the whole rebel army. Truxillo led the troops that were to fight it, and was beaten at Las Cruces. Hidalgo marched on towards Mexico, but, after halting for some days before the town, with fatal hesitation turned aside. An army, under Don Felix Maria Calleja, sent in pursuit, beat Hidalgo's forces at Aculco, though the Indians fought only too recklessly, rushing at the very mouths of the enemy's guns, and thrusting their straw hats into the muzzles. They retired, and were pursued into Guanaxuato, where Calleja deliberately butchered in the great square fourteen thousand men, women, and children. The army of revolt fell then upon Guadalaxara, where its forces were broken, and Calleja's orders were "to exterminate the people of every town or village that showed signs of adherence to the rebels." There were men enough to carry on the fight with Spain, but they wanted arms and ammunition, and Hidalgo was about to sail to the United States for these, when he was betrayed into the hands of the Spaniards, degraded from the priesthood, given over to the secular arm, and shot at Chihuahua in July of the year eighteen hundred and eleven.

Then followed a year of diffused civil war, during which the party of independence formed a junta, or central government, of five members, chosen by a large body of respectable landed proprietors. The people of the afflicted country, at a congress of Chipalzingo, made in moderate terms their last demands—which were burnt by the hangman—of a representative assembly, and equal rights in Mexico for Spaniards and Mexicans.

Then rose up another country curate, Morelos, who held a commission under Hidalgo. There was again army against army. Morelos was besieged in Cuautla, till a rat there was worth a dollar, and a cat worth six dollars, as meat. But he and all his forces contrived an escape, with the loss of only seventeen men. Then Calleja spent his fury with atrocious cruelty upon the helpless citizens of Cuautla, while Morelos was capturing Orizaba and Oaxaca. At Oaxaca a brave youth, in face of the enemy, swam the moat around the tower, and cut the rope of the drawbridge, over which, when it fell, the victorious insurgents marched. Another young Mexican chief, whose father had been one of the seventeen taken during the escape from Cuautla, offered to return three hundred prisoners in exchange for the old man. The offer was refused, and the old man was shot; upon which the young soldier set all his prisoners free, lest he might be tempted to a cruel vengeance. Morelos carried on the struggle for four years, and was at last taken by General Concha, when remaining in a mountain pass with a small devoted band, to keep the Spanish army at bay while the members of the Mexican congress were being escorted to a place of safety. "My life," he said, "is of little consequence, if the congress be saved. My race was run when I saw an independent government established." After a stout resistance, when he was left fighting almost alone, Morelos was taken prisoner, and he was shot in December, eighteen hundred and fifteen, his last prayer being, "If I have done well, Lord, thou knowest it. If ill, to Thy infinite mercy I commend my soul."

For more years the struggle was continued. It had in Xavier Mina, who was in revolt

against the despotism of the restored Ferdinand, a Spaniard for leader; but the Mexicans distrusted him for his birth's sake, and he too was at last taken and shot. That was in November, eighteen hundred and seventeen, and the viceroy, whose name then was Apodaca, wrote to Spain (after the manner of the pacifying news we now read in the Moniteur) that Mexico was faithful to the Spanish crown, which need not send another soldier to his aid. And the viceroy proceeded to entrust to Colonel Iturbide, a Creole, the duty of proclaiming at the head of the troops the re-establishment of the absolute authority of the king.

Iturbide had begun a selfish career as a brilliant soldier, by joining in efforts to overturn the rule of Spain; then he had gone in private anger to the Spanish side, and beaten the Mexicans in battles, besides winning the clergy with professions of resolve to expiate the excesses of his former life by a rigid course of penance and mortification. Therefore the viceroy trusted him as a safe instrument of Spanish despotism. But the use he made of the eight hundred men entrusted to him was to win them to his design, then issue at the little town of Iguala, in February, eighteen 'twenty-one, a scheme of independence, called the Plan of Iguala. This was carefully devised to bid for the union of parties who had common interests against Spain, with the three guarantees of abolition of caste, Mexican independence, and the establishment of the Roman Catholic religion. The crown was to be offered to the King of Spain, and, on his refusal, to some other member of the reigning family. Exactly six months after its date, on the twenty-fourth of August, eighteen 'twenty-one, a new Spanish viceroy, O'Donoju, meeting Iturbide at Cordova, there accepted for Spain the terms of the Plan of Iguala, and the revolution was accomplished.

Iturbide became president of a regency of five. The Spanish Cortes scouted the treaty of Cordova, and in the following May, Iturbide attained his object, and was declared by his army Emperor of Mexico, as Augustine the First.

He reigned ten months, gave himself imperial airs, and was about to remove his friend, General Santa Anna, from the government of Vera Cruz, when Santa Anna turned upon him, and proclaimed a republic by what was called the Act of Casa-Mata, in which two other generals took part with him. Iturbide, deserted by his followers, abdicated, and was furnished with a vessel to take him to Leghorn and a yearly pension of five thousand pounds. But he was to die if he set foot again in Mexico. He did return, in character of a Pole, was discovered, and then it fell to his turn to be shot.

To tell of all that happened after the demoralising age of Spanish despotism between the time of Iturbide or Augustine the First, emperor of Mexico, who set himself over his country's liberties, and that of Maximilian the Second, a foreigner set again by foreigners over the liberties of Mexico, and the first man since Iturbide who has ventured to sit in state upon Mexican thorns, would be a long story. Something of it, however, we may take another day for telling. The old Aztec king, we have seen, had a probationary time, during which, if he slept, his guards pricked his legs and arms with the thorns of the metl, or maguay, which are like pins, to rouse him to a sense of his position. But the Mexican thorns which now prick any despotic would-be ruler of that land are not like pins, they are like swords. During the interval between the two emperors, confusion has come of the struggle of the chief clergy and other privileged men to keep their *fueros*, or exemptions from responsibility before common tribunals, and the other rights that, ingrained in the old social system, had survived the revolution. It was a law introduced by Juarez, and named after him, by which the equal rights of all citizens was established. But a stout battle followed, in which, for reasons we have seen, the parish priests were on the side of the people, and the higher dignitaries of the church—in a land long church-ridden and still very superstitious—were the heads of the antagonism. When the popular cause had been betrayed by a former leader, Benito Juarez became the chief representative of the Mexican cause. He was true to it, before the interference of the French, through years of trial. He had broken at last the power of the antagonists of liberty, was by the great body of the Mexicans, whom he had trained in some degree to political knowledge, accepted as a president who naturally represented the republic, and was moving quietly in the direction of peace and the removal of old obstacles to trade. The obstructive party that had suffered at home the extraction of its fangs, then sent for a new set of teeth from Paris. We know what followed upon that; and what is yet to come, the past, as it has here been told, will perhaps help us to guess.

OUR AUNTS.

What would become of half of us if we had no aunts? I don't know precisely what would have become of a score of persons upon whom my mind's eye now rests; but generally, I am sure that but for their aunts they would have been in the race of life, by this time, nowhere. They would have fallen out of the course long ago and gone to the deuce, or died in ditches, as their other relatives metaphorically predicted of them.

It is mercifully ordered in the great scheme of existence that nearly every person should have an aunt who is willing to grow into an old maid, and to sacrifice her life to the good of others—those others being generally her nephews and nieces. Aunts are the fairy good godmothers of society, the supplementary mothers who are often more kind and indulgent to the children, than their parents are. There is not a single person anywhere who is not familiar

with this idea of a good aunt. We sometimes hear of children who never knew father nor mother; but where is the child who never knew an aunt? When the father and mother disappear and leave the poor infant to the mercy of the world, who is it that takes the little waif in, and feeds and clothes it, and sends it to school? Who? The aunt. The good kind tender-hearted soul, who, perhaps, has been passed over in life, who has toiled hard, who has suffered much, who, at any rate, has never tasted the joys of maternity, who has certainly never incurred its vexations. It is really wonderful, under such circumstances, that these women should retain so much humanity, that the fire of love should not have been quenched in their lonely hearts, that the milk of human kindness should not have dried up in their breasts long ago. We should be thankful to Heaven for these maiden aunts of ours: they are a legion of angels upon earth, for ever hovering about us, to pity and to succour.

If the natural history of aunts were faithfully and accurately followed out, I am inclined to think that the aunts of whom I speak would be found to be a distinct species of the genus. There are points of resemblance in all aunts of this class, which are not to be observed in persons who stand to society in other relations. There are many varieties of mothers; some good, some bad, some indifferent; there are also many varieties of fathers, brothers, sisters, and uncles. There is the kind and indulgent father; but quite as often there is the harsh and tyrannical father. There is the affectionate brother and the jealous brother; the loving sister and the spiteful sister. Then, as to the uncle (who should be a counterpart of the aunt in everything, being the masculine of the species), is it not proverbial that while some of them poke their nephews in the ribs, call them sly dogs, and give them no end of bank-notes because they wouldn't sell their uncles' pictures, there are others, cruel, bloodthirsty—rapacious uncles, who take their nephews into dark woods and leave them to die of hunger. But our aunts!—our aunts are always good. Who ever heard of a wicked aunt?

Be it understood, however, that I do not reckon among my bright particular aunts the sister of your father or mother, who marries and has children of her own; nor the lady whom your uncle may take to himself with the same common-place result. We don't think of *her*, be she the one or the other, in the true aunt sense. Do you ever call *her* "aunty," and go and sit in her lap, and put your arms round her neck? Answer me that. No, no. She is Aunt—mark how cold the word is without the endearing diminutive!—Aunt Charles or Aunt James, with lots of little buckets of her own dipping into the well of her affections; and she has not a drop for you. Dare to sit in *her* lap, and she will push you rudely and coldly away. Venture to put your arm round *her* neck, and she will probably stand upon her propriety.

The person whom you call "aunty dear" is quite another order of being. She is your father's sister, or your mother's sister—occasionally the wife of your uncle; but, in this last case, she is only "aunty dear" when she has no children of her own. As to her natural disposition: she is born to love and to be loved—born to deny herself, to suffer patiently, to toil and spin, not for herself, but for others—born, above all, to rear the weakly sheep, and to rescue the black ones who go astray.

These dear, good aunts of ours, so lovable in their brown fronts (with that single band of black velvet across their foreheads), in their plain prim caps and clock-cases of black silk, are not of that order of Samaritans who wait until their Christian duties are forced upon them. They meet the troubles of their nephews and nieces more than half way. They are interested in us before we come into the world, and, when we do make our début, they are the first to applaud us. They are also the first to be troubled with us. Our mothers have all the honour and glory of presenting us to the world. We are the finest children that ever were seen, and our parents have all the credit; but we are, mayhap, the most fractious brats that ever were born, and aunty dear has all the trouble of hushing us to sleep and sitting up half the night to pat us on the back and give us corrective waters. It is aunty dear who stands godmother, and presents us with the silver mug or the silver spoon. It is aunty dear who, when we are one too many, pays for our schooling; it is aunty dear who invites us to pass the holidays with her, when our loving parents are glad to be rid of us, and takes that opportunity of rigging us out with a new suit of clothes. It is aunty dear who stands between us and many a well-deserved whipping, and it is the same good soul who takes the trouble to sing old ballads to us, and tell us old-world legends, which often have a great share in refining our tastes and forming our characters. If it had not been for a dear old aunty, the name of Walter Scott might not now be a household word throughout the world.

Why should aunty take all this interest in us, and put herself to all this trouble on our behalf? We are not hers; we shall not be mentioned as being the very image of *her*, or as doing *her* credit. It is more than likely, too, that our mother, by getting a husband, while aunty has been condemned to lonely celibacy, has given her cause for jealousy; that, on the wedding-day, while the bride was being arrayed in orange-blossom and white lace, the destined aunty was down in the kitchen tying up fowls with white ribbon for the déjeûner à la fourchette. Why does she forgive and forget all this and love us so tenderly and so unselfishly? I have a theory about this, and I believe I am right in the main. I believe that women are never *naturally* vain, heartless, and unloving. They are made so. Let a woman alone with her own heart, and in most cases it will grow greener and warmer with age. There is no top round to the ladder

of her heart's aspirations, as in the case of the woman who marries. The latter is apt to think that she has fulfilled her mission, so far as her heart is concerned, when she drives away from the church door. She cannot, of course, contemplate such a thing as loving again and being married again. When she is married, the lamp of her love is at the brightest—and when things are at their brightest they are apt to fade.

The old maid's love does not exhaust itself in too fierce a flame. Objects arise to engage her affection every day. She has always a heart to give away to every new comer who may have a claim upon it, and though she gives it away fully and entirely, she always has it still to give. In one word, her love is not a selfish love.

I very strongly suspect that old maids are in the aggregate happier than married women—happier because they are left more to the influence of their own single natures, because they are not subjected to the will of others, and because their position exempts them from the tear and wear of passions which too often leave the heart chilled and the nature perverted.

When I think how happy, how good, how beautiful even in their fronts, our maiden aunts are, I feel very much disposed to finish the novel which I now have in hand, by making the culminating point of happiness at the end of the third volume, the resolve of my heroine not to go to St. George's, Hanover-square, with Augustus, but to live and die an old maid.

It is a very old idea that aunts, and, I will add, uncles, are in some way designed by nature to be impartial third parties in life, to whom first and second parties may fly in time of distress and trouble. The French call their mutual friend the pawnbroker, ma tante. We, in England, call him our uncle. I think the French have adopted the true personification. The aunt is fully entitled to say, with a certain person of our acquaintance, that aunt is the friend, not uncle. I cannot imagine how we English originally made the mistake of calling our mutual friend-in-need our uncle. Compared to the true, kind-hearted, unselfish, unpretending aunt, our uncle is a blustering, ostentatious, purse-proud, vain old humbug. He is only kind to his nephews and nieces when it administers to his own vanity and his own importance. What trouble does *he* take for us? He only gives away his money because he has got more of it than he knows what to do with. It is the easiest thing in the world to give away money; but it is not an easy thing to give away love and sympathy, to give away ease and rest, to give away to others the love and care that you might keep for yourself. No; the uncle is a constituted sham and a humbug, and I shall seize an early opportunity to write an essay upon him, and take him down a peg.

Meanwhile, I will endeavour to discharge some part of my debt of gratitude—I can never discharge it all—to aunty.

I shall not be stating at all an exceptional case when I say that I had an aunt who was an "aunty dear" to three generations. This is one of the blessed things about our aunts. They are sent into the world to be good and also to live long. The good die early, sentimental folks say. Stuff! The good, thank Heaven! live to have false teeth and wear false hair, and they are the most delightful creatures to kiss in the world. I can only think of that dear old aunty of mine (though I never saw her until she was threescore: she was my grand-aunt) as a fair young creature of seventeen summers, with blue eyes, and flaxen hair streaming over her shoulders to her waist. I have this vision of her—though, when I knew her, she was wrinkled, and wore a brown wig that was anything but invisible, and a cap that some folks would call a fright—because she once told me that she was like that when, as a girl, she ran over the hill one morning early to bid good-bye to her lover, who was going away to sea. She held me on her knee, and patted me on the head, and strained me to her breast, when she told me that story; and I knew that she had kept her great wealth of love for me and mine. For the sailor-boy never came back. She had a lock of his hair, which she used to take from a sacred drawer and show me. It was jet black, and when she handled it, it curled round her finger, as if the spirit of her sailor-boy had come back from the depths of the sea to embrace her with all that was left of him on earth.

"And what did you do, aunty," I said, "when you heard the news?"

"What did I do, laddie? I criet and criet until my heart was dry and my een were sair. I think I should ha' deet if your mother hadna' come; but when she came I took up wi' her. She had bonny black een just like my laddie's, and I loved her and nursed her for his sake. And when they had ower mony o' them at hame, I took her to live with me, and she was my lassie until your father married her. And then I was lonely again until your father had ower mony o' them, when I took your sister, and now I've got you: and a pretty handful I've had with the lot o' ye."

She did not mean these last sharp words a bit; for she took one of the succeeding generation to live with her, and it was always in danger of being smothered with kisses.

Ah, dear aunty in Heaven, what would have become of some of us but for you?

HARDIHOOD AND FOOLHARDIHOOD.

The month of July, 1865, when noted down in the annals of English families, will bear the black record of four lives, belonging to young, robust, intelligent, hopeful men, swept away. And for why? Because of foolhardihood.

There is a Swiss household, within sight of Mount Cervin, which has lost a hale, strong, brave son—a man tempted for hire to assist his employers to conquer impossibilities. And for why? Because of foolhardihood.

There was another Swiss household last year similarly laid waste by the death of the faithful and indefatigable Bennen, Professor Tyndal's guide. But then the Professor, if too eager in adventure (we recollect a terrible account of his creeping round an ice-column, with his heels higher than his head), has some reason for his temerity, as one accumulating scientific facts with regard to the singularities and the exceptions of the rock and glacier land. Only it is fearful that, with no very great result hitherto promulgated to the world, an excellent, faithful, and trustworthy being should have paid the penalty.

There has been too much nonsense got up, on the renown to be won by scrambling high, rather high, higher, highest among Peaks and Passes—which yield, in nine cases out of ten, no new aspect of Nature—simply because nobody has ever been up there before. But the nonsense becomes ghastly when it implies contempt for and waste of human life—a gift too holy to be played with like a toy, under false pretences, by bragging vanity. There has been too much enthusiastic cant about "cutting out work:" of credit claimed for him who, in spite of desperate hazard, and by connivance of chances of weather not to be guaranteed by the most experienced in mountain climates, makes good his petty victory of standing on some rock splinter, or crossing some ice-crevice, where human foot has never stood till then. The real quality of enjoyment attendant on most of these ascents, if sifted, resolves itself into something not altogether unlike the gambler's triumph over the wretched Field of Cloth of Green at Baden-Baden. Why not go in for the prize? Manasseh won his seventy thousand pounds there. Sir Theodore broke the bank only last week. Upon this hint, Brown and Jones and Robinson play, and any one of the three is capable of blowing his brains out should Black win twenty times out of the one-and-twenty! Those poor creatures, who brutalise themselves by accepting wagers to perform preposterous gluttonies, have a like argument—that of eating, drinking, and digesting more than throat and stomach have ever done before. After all, the most aspiring member of the Alpine Club is beaten in endurance, and thus according to the code of honour, competition, and glory, by the hook-swingers of the East and the Red Men of the woods, from whom mortal tortures fail to extort a cry.

No living creature could dream that any one permitted to speak in these pages could use a paragraph, a word, a syllable, a letter, in disparagement of earnestness, bravery—free use of the limbs, readiness in emergency to be enhanced by training (though such has been proved to present itself as an instinct to those who believe in Duty—under circumstances the most trying, not merely of thew and sinew, but also of imagination and nerve). We live, and move, and have our being, in this England of ours, by aid of that patient and indomitable sense of responsibility which keeps every man who hopes up to the working out of his hope (forlorn enough, God help us! sometimes); which compels every man who has passed his word, to fulfil the same; which makes light of fatigue, danger, risk of life, with every man who has taken service. And the last attribute is proved so often as some terrible catastrophe occurs. We recollect the death-ride at Balaclava—the soldiers who went down, standing under arms, in the Birkenhead. We recollect the sea-boy, told of in this paper not long ago, who sat still to be swallowed up by the storm, in his boat, because he would not quit his post. Such stories crowd on us by the thousand. When this great and noble devotion shall pass away from us, or wane in obedience to anything like secondary and selfish interests or advantages, then, indeed, may we take leave of the glory of England. Flecked and flawed as it is, owing to want of clear sense on the part of our rulers (who, by the way, are just now beginning to speculate whether those entering the English navy might not be as well taught to swim), the ancient spirit is not dead among us. The more need, then, is there to protect it in any direction of mistake and vagary.

It is time—the apotheosis of foolhardihood having been closed by a dead march, the echoes of which will not cease during the lives of those whom they concern—that its triumphs should be displayed in their real colours, and not those of the red fire, blue fire, and green fire, which accompany, theatrically, every coronation of theatrical success.

No wonder that the weary London lawyer—weary of his desk, weary of his exhausted atmosphere, weary of the terrible streets, the stones of which burn under foot; no wonder that the man of business whose lot is cast in some hideous, prosy, provincial town; no wonder that the professor, who has had enough of the lecture-room and its apparatus; if he have a fibre of manhood in him, rejoices in the change, rejoices in the adventure, rejoices (this largely enters into the Englishman's account) in his power of proving to himself that he is neither effete nor effeminate, nor has been rendered stupid by the air, late hours, and tiresome headwork—but can bear himself as a man among men of a class, and of sympathies different to his own. No wonder that the exquisitely bracing mountain air, the superb sight of God's marvels in the worlds of rock and ice and snow, are found by the thoughtful and high-spirited intoxicating in their amount of temptation. But there is a limit which sense and sanity prescribe; and of late, among these Peaks and Passes of the Alps, the necessity has become that where Brown could not get, and Jones should not arrive, Robinson must mount, the last with a patent apparatus. The "why" remains an unexplained fact, save on the hypothesis of bragging vanity; "the how," a story which, as has been said, cleaveth a grief into the hearts of many a home, where such grief need not have been cleft. Surely, therefore, this is not the wrong moment for the discriminating of hardihood from foolhardihood.

Let us look at the latter in the face; laugh who will. The smallest expression of this vain and paltry spirit will be found in those with whom it is a pride to do everything at the last minute with a dash and a defiance of time and casualty; who will boast that they are never on a railway platform a second before the train is to start, and who are triumphant because they say they are never left behind.

Never?—as I write, the spectre of one arises to recollection, with a bitter distinctness—a force bearing on the argument so strongly to be pressed as a duty on every brave Englishman, by this late, gratuitous tragedy on the Mont Cervin. I look upon a good, honourable, intelligent fellow, with life, promise, and fortune opening to him on every side, but with whose spirits and strength an element of boast and defiance had become so closely intertwined, that to name a peril was to make him leap at it, no matter what the chances. He was in the south of Spain, on a pleasure journey; and by those who knew how the coast-road is liable to be traversed by rains, as sweeping as those of the Sicilian fiumara, was warned, on a certain autumn night, following many days of storm, not to go on. He was not alone. One of the most complete, unselfish, and gifted men that ever did England honour—a man marked out for honours—the central point of a large and loving family, was his travelling companion. There had been a cataract of rain pouring from heaven for eight-and-forty hours; and the two, as I have said, were, at nightfall, by one who knew the country, advised to wait. Had the adviser known one of the party, he might have calculated on what followed. The more venturesome traveller overruled his companion by mere habitual force of high spirits. The two set forth through the night. In the morning, on the shore betwixt Barcelona and Castillon de la Plana, there was only to be seen a solitary mule belonging to the diligence straggling about. Its inmates, borne down to the sea by the torrent, against which they had been warned, had been torn to pieces on the cruel rocks. Two homes were made desolate—one for ever; and for why? Because the bragging vanity of Foolhardihood had had its will.

There is not one out of ten of those who arrive at Man's estate in this country, who is not cognisant of some such disaster as I am dwelling on; of some case in which a valuable existence has been flung away, at the incitement of a folly which will own no difficulties, nor can endure to find itself surpassed in effort and enterprise; of some generous being goaded to seek his death by false shame or false emulation. Those who make capital of any kind out of "sport," will gloss over these terrible deaths as inevitable visitations of Providence, and whine a remonstrance made up of a few catch words. The salubrious excitement of mountaineering for over-worked men; the proud preeminence of England in manly courage. We know the tune by heart. And then the accident ought not to have happened. There was no need for the dead men to have slipped, had the mystery of scrambling about in perilous places been more elaborately practised or better understood. And as to risk—think of the appalling and certain perils of a ride "across country"—why, a chimney (this is a very favourite illustration) may be blown down and kill the quiet citizen as he passes along the street.

The Alpine Club has had nothing to do with the fever of competition which the last few years have seen. There is hardly one of the apologists, be it also noticed, who has not to tell of some narrow escape of life, due to his own judicious management of ropes and crampons, and the rest of the machinery got up in London for the use of the foolhardy. But which of them will deny that the problem of the Peak of the Matterhorn being accessible or not, has been solved at a cost to which no true-hearted man, be he ever so bold, so muscular, ever so skilled at describing scenes of breathless peril, would wish, directly or indirectly, by precept or example, to have contributed?

AMATEUR FINANCE.

IN THREE PARTS. PART II.

Some fourteen months ago, the writer of this paper happened to make the journey from Smyrna to Trieste in the Austrian Lloyd's steamer. Among the few passengers was a Greek merchant, a native of Chios, with whom he became pretty intimate. This gentleman's conversation—like that of most Levantines—turned upon matters monetary. The writer and he discussed the subject of finance and credit companies, which just then had found their way into England. The writer hazarded an opinion that if these undertakings multiplied in anything like the proportion in which other kinds of companies had multiplied, there would not be found capital enough in all England wherewith to work them. "Capital!" exclaimed the Greek, "that is what you Englishmen are always talking about, and the craving after it keeps you always behind the rest of the world. Give me pen, ink, paper, and stamps, combined with commercial credit, *and I will never ask for capital.* Capital, my dear sir, *is merely nominal, and can be increased to any extent you like, in five minutes.*"

I have since thought, that in the "House and Land Finance and Credit Company (Limited)," we conducted our business much on the principles of this Greek gentleman. We, as it were, created securities for ourselves, and upon these securities we based our operations as if they were bonâ fide assets derived from some good source, and bearing some other signature. But the working of our system, and of the easy manner in which we managed to raise our dividends to a fabulous amount, and our shares to a proportionate premium, will be best illustrated as I proceed with my story.

Among the directors of our company was a

pretended Frenchman, whose real name was Montague, but who now called himself Monsieur Montaine. His financial talents were indisputable, but his antecedents were not quite so unexceptional; that is, so far as we knew, for it was not given to us to know much. This much, however, was certain; that but four years previously Mr. Montague had come over to England as the commis voyageur, or traveller, for a Bordeaux wine house, and that he had no resources in the world, except the small commission which he got for what he sold in England. By degrees he began to see an opening for himself, and, having a little credit with the house for which he had hitherto travelled, he set up for himself in London as a wine merchant. Being a sharp-witted fellow, he was not slow to perceive how very easily even the sharpest men of business in England are taken in by a foreigner, and how credit will be pressed upon one speaking another tongue than English, while a native-born Briton will be often denied it even if he have good security to offer. Of this mania for strangers, Mr. Montague, or Monsieur Montaine, availed himself to the utmost. He spoke French very well, and could therefore pass himself off as a native of France, without much difficulty, the more so as his English commercial friends were not likely to be very critical judges of that language. To hire an office somewhere in the neighbourhood of Fenchurch-street, purchase a little furniture, provide a few ledgers and day-books, hang up a calendar, a map or two, and a ground plan (purely imaginary) of the estate from which the very fine brands of claret (purchased at the London Docks, by the hogshead, as wanted), of which he had the exclusive sale, granted by the owner of the vineyards, did not require any very large capital. The whole affair did not cost more (including a zinc plate with the name of the firm, "MONTAINE AND COMPANY, WINE MERCHANTS") than a ten-pound note; and in consequence of his large imaginary connexion with the south of France, as well as the very superior wine which he was supposed to receive from Bordeaux, he managed, in a short time, to make himself a name, and to have not only credit, but some little capital. The latter he had increased considerably by a most judicious marriage with a not-over-young maiden lady, whose native land was Camberwell. Mr. Montague having been born an Englishman, and brought up—so far as he had any religious education at all—a Protestant, now, as Monsieur Montaine, gave out that he had been born and bred an idolatrous Papist, but having seen the error of his ways, and having undergone not a little persecution, he had become an enlightened member of the English Church. As a (supposed) foreigner and convert, this gentleman was doubly interesting to a certain class, and this degree of interest in all belonging to him had served to bring about his union with the not-over-comely nor very young lady, who brought with her, as a marriage dowry, five thousand English pounds sterling, besides a very comfortable freehold, eight-roomed, semi-detached villa, in the immediate neighbourhood of Kennington Oval.

To Monsieur Montaine these riches were as untold and unheard-of wealth. But he was determined that his ambition should not stop within these limits. His business gave him more than enough to live upon, for the Camberwell lady was an excellent housekeeper, and he found that he spent less as a married man than as a bachelor. The money brought him by his union was but half settled upon his wife; with the other two thousand five hundred pounds he commenced speculating in joint-stock companies, foreign railways, and doing a little bill discounting when anything very good and extremely safe in that line turned up. When I first knew him, he had carried on this little game for about ten years, and was reputed to be worth twenty thousand pounds: which we will set down at five, in addition to what was settled upon his wife. The first time I ever heard of this gentleman was when the board of the "HOUSE AND LAND FINANCE AND CREDIT COMPANY (LIMITED)" was formed. The name of "MONSIEUR MONTAINE (OF THE FIRM OF MONTAINE AND CO., LONDON AND BORDEAUX), 176, CLOSE-LANE, FENCHURCH-STREET, AND SILVERTON LODGE, SURREY," looked exceedingly well upon the list of our directors, and tempted not a few, who would not have trusted us with a five-shilling piece, to put the most implicit confidence in our commercial standing. Those who were acquainted with the antecedents of Monsieur Montaine must have laughed heartily at the good faith with which his co-directors received his assertions and pretensions. But, like most other people gifted with brazen powers, he got on, and got on well, as will appear.

One of the first, if not the very first "operations" proposed to the "HOUSE AND LAND FINANCE AND CREDIT COMPANY (LIMITED)," was proposed by Monsieur Montaine.

There was—so Monsieur Montaine told us—in the south of France an estate upon which some of the very finest kinds of claret were grown. The value of this property—as he proved to us by French legal documents which not one of us could understand—was estimated at one million five hundred thousand francs, or sixty thousand pounds in English money. The owner of these vineyards wanted to part with them, and a joint-stock company had been formed at Bordeaux to buy them. Half the purchase-money was ready, the other half it was proposed to borrow of us, giving our company the most ample security. Monsieur Montaine told us that although an outline of this "operation" had been sent to him, he would, if it were deemed expedient, proceed at once to France, make himself acquainted with the details of the affair, return to England, and lay everything before his brother directors. This journey was sanctioned at the next meeting of the board, and five guineas a day were allowed as travelling expenses for our delegate, besides authority being given him to draw upon the board for any further

"necessary expenses." Monsieur Montaine proceeded on his journey, and at the end of a week sent a telegram to the office, to the effect that the "operation" was a magnificent one for us, and that he would be in London in forty hours to lay before us the details of the affair, and obtain our sanction for concluding the business. By the next board-day he was in town, and at once proceeded to unfold the scheme, which was to benefit alike those who lent and those who borrowed.

The estates, he said, were worth half as much again as they had been set down at; that is to say, he, as a wine merchant, and knowing the value of the wines the estates produced, estimated them at ninety thousand pounds. They were to be sold for sixty thousand, of which one-half was ready to be paid down, and of which we were to advance the other half; but only in our acceptances, not in cash. And for our bills for thirty thousand pounds, extending over twelve months, we were to hold as security the title-deeds of this magnificent estate. Our remuneration for the acceptances was to be a net sum of three thousand pounds, hard cash, paid in advance. In short, we, the "House and Land Finance and Credit Company (Limited)," could not by possibility lose by the transaction. If the bills we gave, were not paid at maturity by the parties at Bordeaux, true we should have to meet them, but had we not in hand ninety thousand pounds' worth of property with which to pay thirty thousand? However, to make everything doubly sure, it would be as well to depute our solicitor and another director to proceed to Bordeaux with Monsieur Montaine, and if they found everything as that gentleman had represented, to give them full written and vested powers from the board to complete the whole transaction at once.

To Bordeaux, then, our deputation proceeded, Monsieur Montaine being the only one of the three who really understood French, though the other two prided themselves on being able to speak that language fluently, and to read it "as well as English, sir." But there is a vast difference between theory and practice. Our solicitor had no doubt, at one time of his life, been able to ask for what he wanted, in any restaurant in the Palais Royal, or even to understand the greater part of what was said on the stage during a French farce at the St. James's Theatre. But many years of exclusively professional life had caused him to forget nearly all he had learnt in that wise, so that now he could barely understand what was said in ordinary conversation, even when those who were talking spoke slowly and distinctly. But no one could have offended this gentleman more than by offering to interpret between him and a Frenchman. It would have annoyed him far less to question his knowledge of law than his acquaintance with French, though he was an excellent solicitor of more than twenty-five years' experience in a very good business. The other director, who, with Monsieur Montaine and our solicitor, formed our deputation to Bordeaux, had no knowledge whatever of any tongue save the English tongue, and depended entirely on his two colleagues for "getting on." The trip promised to be a pleasant one; the season being July.

In due time—not without a three days' sojourn among the pleasures of Paris—the details of which halt were fortunately, for her peace of mind, unknown to Madame Montaine, of "Silverton Lodge, Surrey"—our colleagues reached Bordeaux, where they found that a pleasant apartment had, by the forethought of Monsieur Montaine, been engaged for them at the Hôtel de l'Empereur. There are many more unpleasant places to live in than the capital of claret-land, and our deputation did not pass their time disagreeably. Moreover, Frenchmen mix business and pleasure together, much more than is the custom in this country. Thus, after rising at eight o'clock, and while partaking of their morning café au lait, our deputation would be visited by two or three of the Bordeaux gentlemen who were acting for the joint-stock company that wished to purchase the estate, and that wanted the advance to be made upon it by us. These gentlemen would bring with them a few hard-to-be understood, and, if possible, more difficult to decipher, documents, which were invariably left with Monsieur Montaine to read and go through at his leisure. The French gentlemen would in the mean time sit smoking, talking of the opera, of the Italian question, or any subject that came uppermost. Now and again, perhaps, there was a reference made to the business that had brought our friends all the way from London, but only in a sketchy sort of way. The interview finished by one or other of the French gentlemen asking the three Englishmen to breakfast at some excellent restaurant, where, over good cookery, better wine, pleasant conversation, coffee and cigars, three or four hours were consumed. Now and again our deputation made a pretext of looking into the business which had brought them to Bordeaux; and on two, if not three occasions, they made a great show of going over the estate upon which the money had to be advanced. But what with the distance—some three leagues, or nine miles—from Bordeaux to the estate, the great heat of the weather, the excellence of the breakfasts, and the confusion which the computation of French weights produced in the heads of the solicitor and the other director, these excursions always ended by two out of the three of the deputation being in a far greater muddle after they went to visit the property than before. In short, after a time, the real business, and the only business, of the deputation, was done by the owner of "Silverton Lodge, Surrey." A fortnight slipped away in no time, and the deputation met together to draw up a report; but after one or two ineffectual attempts to compose anything readable, the business ended in Monsieur Montaine's being deputed to do it.

Monsieur Montaine, in twenty-four hours, produced something between a letter and a report, which was addressed to the London Board of the "House and Land Credit and Finance

Company," on which—written in the name of the deputation—the operation of advancing twenty thousand pounds on the security of the estate was strongly recommended, and a most flourishing account given of the property we were to hold as security. This was signed by the solicitor, by Monsieur Montaine, and by the other director, and, having been forwarded to London, received the sanction of the board. Had we known—what afterwards came to light—that Monsieur Montaine had received from "the other side" a fee of one thousand pounds for carrying the business through, and that the estate we held as security had been in the market any time these ten years for less than a fourth of its asserted value, we should not have been quite so ready.

As it was, the bills were accepted and sent out to Bordeaux; the two thousand pounds commission and interest was paid us; and the title-deeds, in all due form, were made over to a notary in Bordeaux who acted as our agent in the business.

In the first half-yearly report of our company, nothing could look better than the statement—among others—in our accounts, that, without parting with a shilling of our capital, and while holding undoubted security for the bills we had given, even to four times the amount of the sum we had guaranteed, we had received in hard cash, and in advance, a bonus of two thousand pounds. If every operation we entered into, turned out as fortunate, we might indeed expect that the shares of our company would rise in value. Our shareholders were delighted. Small hints respecting our increased and increasing prosperity were allowed to creep out in the money articles of the public press, and these served to increase the desire of the public to become shareholders. Our credit was good, our respectability undoubted, and our wisdom the praise of all the banks. The uninitiated—Finance and Credit Societies were new in England at that time—wondered how we managed, in our reports, to prove that we had nearly all paid-up capital at the banker's, and yet could declare a very large dividend indeed upon what our shareholders had paid. Many companies made money by a profitable investment of their capital, but we managed to do this and yet kept our capital at interest at our banker's. How did we do it? This was the question asked everywhere.

In the mean time, another notable piece of business was offered us nearer home, and turned out to be most profitable. An English railway wanted to increase its capital for the purpose of laying down a branch line. The undertaking was perfectly legitimate, and would no doubt turn out very profitable for the company. The bill had passed parliament, but as yet the money to carry out the scheme had not been raised. There were so many undertakings before the public, so many new concerns springing into life every day, that the directors of the railway were afraid that any attempt on their part to raise more capital would prove a failure, and thus would ruin the credit of their company, and greatly lower the market-value of their existing shares. And yet, not to raise the money would be tantamount to confessing their inability to do so, and would thus as certainly depreciate their shares by another mode. In their difficulty the directors applied to us—in the first place to me as managing director—and after numerous negotiations, meetings, and what not, the pith of the agreement entered into between the two companies was as follows:

"The House and Land Credit and Finance Company" was to advertise this new stock of the railway, and was to state that a third of the new shares had already been subscribed for by our company, or rather by our individual shareholders, and that only two-thirds remained for the public. We undertook to guarantee the railway company that whether these new shares floated or not, they should have the money they required from us, as they wanted it, either on our acceptances or in cash. In return for our carrying this business for them, and guaranteeing that they should by one or the other means have their money, they undertook to pay us a fee of twenty thousand pounds. (They had previously made matters pleasant for me by a cheque for one thousand pounds.)

Seeing our name at the head of the prospectus; believing that we would not "touch" anything that was not very profitable; it being stated that a third of the proposed stock was already subscribed for by our shareholders; and knowing that the affair was bonâ fide; the public not only applied quickly for the new shares of this railway, but those who applied were mostly real investors, and not men of straw, who ask for shares to-day in order to sell them to-morrow, or as soon as they rise in value. We managed to make matters pleasant for the railway company as well as for the new shareholders. In order to attract and allure the latter, we made the calls upon the new shares payable in very small instalments, and spread over a considerable length of time. In the mean time, as the railway directors wanted funds to carry on the works, we gave them our acceptances, which the contractors took as cash, discounting them at a very low rate, or depositing them as securities for loans with their bankers. For these three months' acceptances, we charged at the rate of five per cent interest, and two per cent commission, being, together, at the rate of about thirteen per cent per annum, for we charged fresh commission every time we paid off the old acceptances and gave out fresh bills. This, with the twenty thousand pounds bonus received at the commencement, made a tolerably large addition to our profits for the half year. The Bordeaux estate business had been talked about, and represented as more profitable than it really had been, but the English railway "operation" being at the very doors of the shareholders, was patent to all London, and raised our name high with the public. To our original shareholders our

company was very profitable, or indeed to those who had purchased our shares at anything like the original price. But to others they were of comparative little value: the market-price having risen to so high a premium, that even the large interest we got, was hardly large enough to make the shares pay when bought at such a price. But this state of things told well for some people. For instance, I, who as director had been presented with forty shares, now found them so valuable, that I determined to sell them at the premium of five pounds per share, making, with the sum they were worth at par—but which, having got them gratis, I had never been called upon to pay—of ten pounds each, a nice little amount of seven hundred and fifty pounds. The days when I had to calculate whether it was possible to live upon a hundred and fifty pounds a year, had passed away indeed.

A crusade had been commenced against Finance and Credit Companies, but it did not seem to injure us in any way. Two or three undertakings of like nature to our own, had been such very decided successes, that every morning's paper brought forth something new on the same basis. The Times said the day would not be far distant when every town in the kingdom, and then every street in every town, would have its own particular Finance Company. Still the mania for these schemes continued, though many such companies were born but to die immediately. Our direction increased in number and respectability. We got a live (Irish) peer for our chairman, and more than one member of the House of Commons joined the board. I began to have serious ideas of getting into parliament at the next general election. I was a rich man. Hardly any "good thing" was floated in the City without my having a share of it offered me; and before anything of any magnitude could be concluded with our own company, matters were invariably made pleasant to me.

PORTRAITS.

Portraits may be considered the highest effort of the painter's art; higher, a good deal, than historical painting, which amounts to little more than the mere pictorial poses plastiques and theatricals. Higher, too, than little pieces of genre, which in some instances are a species of portrait-painting. Historical pictures, like the Roman scenes of Le Brun in the Louvre, may be excellent studies and exercises in colour, form, and grouping; but, as the attempt of a Frenchman of the eighteenth century to show us how the Romans, before the beginning of the first, looked and behaved, the whole is false. He is painting from the description of others. To take an instance from Mr. Philip. Most of us know the traditional accessories of Spanish life and costume, and could put together the usual costumier properties into what we should fancy would be a correct representative of Life in Spain. But a glance at the "Murillo" now on the walls of the Academy would show how much more is wanting, and that the mere "wardrobe" portion is, in fact, the least *characteristic* portion of the whole. The mere vulgar eye rests on these generalities, but the skilful one who has been in the country and drank in the strange lights and colours—the *character*, in short—makes an effort that there is no mistaking, and leaves an impression that even those who have not seen, *know* to be true.

But with portraits this principle is yet more remarkable. There, everything must be real, honest, and natural. The divine, almost intangible light of expression, hovering over the face, is seized on by living skill and intellect and imprisoned in colours. Tints of fancy, of humour, of firmness, of melancholy and pensiveness, in short, of the hundred-and-one shades of expression—the presence, in fact, of life—this is what gives the portrait its special value. The absence of this is what drives the photographic portraiture out of the realms of art into the cold enclosure of mechanism and machinery.

This is scarcely understood even as yet. It is often said that a photograph *must* be a perfect likeness, for, according to the common expression, "it *is* you." But it is not you. The instrument itself is incorrect, and exaggerates. It is forgotten that the true portrait-painter does not take his sitter at one special moment, when the eyes are fixed on him in a hard staring gaze, with all the muscles rigid, and the features in a state of smirking catalepsy. But he draws, as it were, from memory, from an acquaintance of so many hours, during which the sitter has been opposite to him, and during which time he has learned by heart the natural, habitual, and most characteristic expression. For a few moments, by the help of some observation, he has caught, say, the sly roguish twinkle of humour in his sitter's eyes, and has secured it for ever. The mere mechanical shape of the features (which the photograph only gives) he has before him, to be put in at any moment. Then enter into the composition the skilful touch, the bright bits of colour, the transparent delicacy of tone, the poetry of treatment, which are reflections from the skilful mind *taking* the picture. In short, anything that is the free natural impression of the soul and of life has at once an interest for other souls—a doctrine often preached by Mr. Ruskin, who has shown how "precious," on this principle, become the unfettered workman's carving on the capital of a pillar, as contrasted with merely arbitrary and conventional design.

On these principles it follows that a portrait has a special interest for us, and that a collection of portraits must be singularly attractive. It is hopeless to think of knowing how some men who are gone, looked; but a portrait is the best substitute. It is, in truth, the only real link between death and life. When, therefore,

the Earl of Derby comes forward with a proposal of gathering together all the known English portraits, it is impossible not to see that we are in presence of an original scheme with unique features of its own, apart and distinct from any exhibition that has been given before. The feeling, on entering the monster collections of pictures that have hitherto been brought together at the grand cosmopolitan festivals, has been one of curious comparison of the style and treatment in favour with the different painters of the world. But here, will be altogether a new sensation. We shall feel, as it were, in the company of mighty ghosts. We shall be inclined to drop our eyes in confusion or reverence before those counterfeit presentments looking down in rows, for we shall know that most of those canvases rested on easels not a yard away from the great sitters, and might be said to reflect their faces like a looking-glass.

I think of the huge company gathered under Lord Derby's invitation—the great princes, captains, prelates, writers, divines, lawyers, and statesmen, all gloomily resenting the visitor's gaze and giving him back stare for stare—that a more piquant treat cannot be conceived than a visit to such a Walhalla. We shall have our pet historical character—our writer, divine, soldier, or sailor—to a sketch of whose appearance pages of graphic description could not help us, in the flesh. The danger is, that there is sure to arise an embarrassment of wealth. The land overflows with portraits. Not a squire's house in the country but has its "ancestor" of more or less merit and interest. The difficulty will be in the selection. To regulate this, it is obvious that there must be two principles. Where the subject is rare, workmanship need not be very much looked to; and where the workmanship is singularly excellent, the celebrity of the subject need not be so much regarded. Offers will pour in, sufficient to absorb double the space available, and we shall gasp at the mob of famous persons who have distinguished our country.

There is one point in Lord Derby's programme that should be reconsidered. It is proposed to make the order purely chronological. That is to say, to enable us to begin at the beginning of English history, public and private, and walk down to the day of Victoria; to start, say, from Holbein at eleven, and end with Boxall and Watts, at four. We would pass by and make our bows to the captains, writers, politicians, and priests of Henry the Eighth, through those of Elizabeth, Charles, George, and the rest. Nothing could be better than this notion. It is far more proper than herding together, as was proposed, all the soldiers, all the priests, all the politicians, so that the soldiers of Henry should be in the same room with the soldiers of Victoria. There would be a frightful monotony in such a course. Never would there be so fatal an illustration of the toujours perdrix principle. We should tire of soldiers, long before we reached the last Victoria captain, and should yawn our way into the next room, which would be left under pretty much the same conditions.

But, owing to the calculated extent of the collection, Lord Derby proposes to halt half way, say at the year of the Revolution, 1688, the allowance of portraits up to that date being sufficient for a single year's digestion; in the following year the series would be taken up again, down to our own time. Now, this scheme is open to the objection of a certain monotony of tone and character in the gathering. The first year's collection would have an ancient old-fashioned air, and not the interest which a mixed though incomplete chronological series would offer. We should be cut off from all modern sympathies. In the main, too, the works would scarcely be of the excellence which a broader class of years would secure, and although we should have Vandyke and Holbein, still others would not be of the same merit and interest. It would be far better to have the chronological series for the first year tolerably complete, and to begin again during the second with another collection. Or, supposing some such arrangement as this were made:—Divide all into classes, such as divines, statesmen, soldiers, literary men, &c., and have only the divines, soldiers, and statesmen during the first year's exhibition, and take the rest in the following year. Still, this would leave ugly blanks, and perhaps the first course would be the better: that of an incomplete chronological order, in which the statesmen, soldiers, &c., would be partially represented during both years. All courses have many difficulties, for here it may be asked what principle is to guide the selection of worthies for the first year, and the postponement of other worthies to the second. It must therefore be confessed that Lord Derby's own proposal, if not the most attractive, is at least the most logical.

Again, if done at all, the thing should be done thoroughly. The kingdom should be thoroughly "thrashed—winnowed" for portraits. There should be explorers sent out to beat all the pictorial jungles. Ireland, specially, is dotted over with fine portraits, notably with Sir Joshua's, whom the mutabilities of social changes and Encumbered Estates Courts have left in cupboards and corners without owners or trustees. Again, there should be no coyness or scruples about palaces or public buildings giving up their pictures for fear of stripping their walls. This faithful and generous nation, which has paid directly and indirectly for such things over and over again, has a right to expect on this occasion the most generous treatment in return. It is to be hoped that all royal collections, and pictures belonging to public boards, will be sent handsomely and with a full graciousness. It has been a little too much of a habit to make a favour of permitting the nation to take a walk in its own grounds, or step up into its own galleries, and see its own pictures.

Yet another suggestion for Lord Derby and his committee. In the catalogue should be a short sketch of the original of each portrait; not in the

moral catalogue strain of "B. 1725, D. 1780," with other such meagre information, but a little characteristic sketch, on the model of what Mr. Cunningham furnished to the Manchester Exhibition. Further, a little hint of criticism as to the special merit of the picture—for nothing is so precious to "the vulgar mind" as a little criticism of this sort, judiciously done. Again, Sir Joshua is very delightful, and will be always welcome; but it is easy to foresee that there will be a tendency to swamp the whole with works of that engaging master. Of late we have seen almost too much of him, and the "pocket-books" discovered by Mr. Tom Taylor.

A TRUE BILL.

Early on the morning of the fifteenth of April, information reached the French police that the Baroness de C. was lying dead in her bed, strangled with a piece of ribbon. She had been married as a widow to Baron de C., and was about twenty-eight years old, very pretty, of engaging manners; and both she and her husband were known far and wide for lavish hospitality.

Three weeks before the murder the baron set out for Russia, where it was said that he inherited some property from a relative. During the absence of her husband the baroness kept very much at home, with Ernestine Lamont, a beautiful girl of the most innocent and simple manners, who had been educated and protected by her. On the night before the murder, the baroness went to the Opera. Ernestine, who was not very well, did not accompany her; neither did she sit up for her, as the baroness had a private key, and did not wish the young lady to be disturbed. It was the custom that when the baroness, on awaking in the morning, rang her bell, Ernestine went first to her bedroom. When, on the morning after the murder, no bell was heard to ring, the servants wondered, and at last one of them went up to Ernestine's room to ask the cause. It was empty. Thinking that she was gone, as usual, to the baroness's bedroom, the servant went thither. There the shutters were still closed, and the night-lamp burning on a little table by the bedside. On the floor lay the lifeless body of Ernestine. The girl now screamed for help; the other servants hurried up-stairs, and on opening the shutters it was seen that the baroness lay dead, evidently strangled with a piece of ribbon, which was at once recognised as belonging to Ernestine, who was lying in a swoon on the floor.

On coming to herself, it was naturally supposed that she would be able to throw some light on the matter, but, to the surprise of all, she showed a nervous hesitation hardly to be reconciled with innocence. On further examination, it was found that the secretaire stood wide open, and that a quantity of papers and other articles were lying about in confusion, as if the contents of each drawer had been hastily turned inside out. By this time the police had arrived. With scarcely a moment's hesitation they pronounced that one of the inmates of the house must either have committed the crime, or at least been an accomplice in it. Evidently, also, there had been robbery added to murder; and, therefore, it was thought right to search the boxes of each member of the household. The servants were all willing; but when it came to Ernestine's turn to deliver up her keys, the young lady showed a strange unwillingness to do so. Of course the police persisted, and in a very little time discovered a large sum of money and several jewels belonging to the murdered lady carefully secreted at the bottom of her box.

"How does mademoiselle account for this money?" was the first question put to her.

"I do not know—I—cannot tell—pray—do not ask me," was the hesitating reply.

The suspicions already attached to her were now considerably strengthened, and the police only discharged their duty in arresting her. The case was tried, and Ernestine Lamont found guilty.

A young lawyer named Bernard, whose knowledge of Ernestine's previous character made it very hard for him to believe her guilty, resolved to see her. After some little difficulty, permission was granted him to visit the condemned in prison. But if he went thither with any faith in her innocence, he left the prison without doubt of her guilt. Her answers to his questions were evasive and unsatisfactory.

On reaching home late that evening, he found a note lying on his table. It was from Ernestine, and ran as follows:

My dear Friend,—I feel that I owe you at least some explanation for my strange conduct, and will therefore put you in possession of the facts of the case. It is only forestalling my intention. This letter would have been delivered to you after my death.

You are aware of the circumstances which made me regard the baroness as a mother. You are aware, too, of her husband's fatal propensity to the gaming-table, a passion which in course of time led to an estrangement between them. The baroness was very beautiful, and still young, and failing to find that love and affection which she had hoped her husband would show her, formed an unfortunate intrigue. I was horror-struck when she informed me of this; but it was not for me to blame her. As might be expected, no good could possibly result from this attachment. Her lover proved unworthy of her confidence, and succeeded, whether by threats or by menaces, I know not, in obtaining from her large sums of money. It was but a few days before her death that she confided this to me, and at the same time begged me to take care of her jewels and money for her in my box, as she dreaded lest her sordid lover should obtain possession of them. The last time I saw her alive was on the night she went to the Opera. At what hour she returned I

know not, for she always had a private key with her. The rest you know.

"Hence, dear friend, you will understand my reluctance to have my boxes searched; and my evasive answers as to the money and jewels found in them.

"Had I told the truth, should I have been believed? No! And how could I say anything that would dishonour the good name of one who has been more than a mother to me? Besides, I did not know even the name of her secret lover, and I had never seen him. No; it is better as it is. I am ready to die. My secret to all save you, shall die with me. That you believe in my innocence is the only comfort I have left me.

"Your unhappy friend,

"ERNESTINE."

"Thank God!" murmured the young man, pressing the paper to his lips. "Henceforth, I will devote my life to prove your innocence to the world. God grant it may not yet be too late!"

Late though it was, Bernard at once repaired to the prefect's house, and after some difficulty procured admission. The prefect fortunately happened to be an old friend of Bernard's father, and it was because of this that the young man was admitted at so late an hour.

"But, my good friend," said the old man, after patiently listening to all he had to say, "believe me, it is a useless task; there is no doubt that the young woman is guilty either as principal or as accomplice. Still, as you so earnestly wish it, you shall be permitted to search the apartments of the murdered lady. And now good night," he added with a smile, "and let me hear the result of your investigations."

Early the next morning, Bernard, accompanied by a gendarme, repaired to the baroness's house. Everything lay exactly as it had been left on the fatal morning; for the house had been and was still in the custody of the police. Not a drawer, nor a cupboard escaped Bernard's notice. There was no violence visible on the windows, as if forcible admission had been gained from the outside. Nothing, in fact, presented itself which gave the slightest clue to the mystery.

The search had now occupied several hours, and Bernard felt that it was useless to remain there any longer. With a sad and heavy heart, therefore, he proceeded to leave the apartment. But in passing out into the entrée, which was quite dark, his foot struck against something, which, on taking up, he found to be a hat. Thinking it belonged to the baron, he was about to hang it up with the others on the peg from which he supposed it to have fallen.

"That hat, monsieur, if you please; I do not remember to have seen it before. It is strange," remarked the gendarme, as he compared the hat in question with the others that hung up in the entrée; "it is larger, and of a different shape to them!"

"Let me have it, my good friend; I will show it to the prisoner. If it should chance to belong to this secret lover of the murdered lady!" thought Bernard to himself, as he hurriedly drove to the prison.

Ernestine was anxiously expecting to see her friend, for he had promised to visit her that day again; and she wished to learn from his own lips whether he still believed in her innocence.

"Do you know this hat, Ernestine?" said Bernard, on entering the cell.

"That hat—good Heavens!—it is the very hat which the baron had on the night he left Paris," said Ernestine, in an excited manner.

"Impossible!—we compared it with the other hats—and this is much larger. I believe it belonged to the baroness's lover——"

"No—no—a thousand times no—it is the baron's—he bought it the very day he left. It was too large for him, and he asked me to put some wadding under the lining for him—see—if it be not there!"

"But, Ernestine, it must be fancy on your part—this hat never belonged to the baron! But—stay—you are right," added Bernard, as, on turning up the lining, the wadding fell out, and with it a piece of paper which had been used to add a little to its thickness. It was a bill written by the landlord of an hotel at Strasburg, made out in the baron's name, for a week's board and lodging. It was dated April 7,—just fourteen days after his departure from Paris.

Ernestine and Bernard looked at each other for a few moments in silence, as strange thoughts passed through the minds of each.

That it was the baron's hat was now proved—but how did it come there? Had he returned to Paris secretly before the murder? Was he the murderer?

Ernestine turned deadly pale.

"Do you suppose that the baron——" she gasped.

"Is the murderer?" added Bernard, finishing the sentence. "Yes! I do. But I will go at once to the prefect."

For the first time since her condemnation a faint ray of hope was kindled in Ernestine's heart. The sight of Bernard, her old friend in happier days, had indeed excited a wish to live in her young breast.

"How thankful I am I did not say anything at the trial. The good God will protect me!"

Bernard now left the prison and hastened to the house of the prefect.

"Well! and what did you find?" asked the old man, smiling sadly at his young friend, who rushed into the room without waiting to be announced.

"Be good enough to examine this hat," said Bernard, as he handed it to him, and recounted to him the manner in which he had found it, and what Ernestine had subsequently told him.

"Her husband!—he the murderer! Yes, it is plain—and we have been accusing an innocent girl!" ejaculated the prefect, carefully examining the hat; "but leave me now; I must

think it over. But let me urge secresy on you, and depend on me."

Early the next morning Bernard was again sent for to the prefect's house.

"I have carefully gone over the whole evidence since I saw you," he said, "and it certainly seems there is a very strong suspicion against the baron. I have caused inquiries to be made, and have ascertained that the baron was a confirmed gambler, and that his journey to Petersburg was probably only a ruse to avoid arrest. It is a terrible case, and we must proceed very cautiously. The baron stands very high in the public esteem, and it seems incredible that he could have committed this horrible crime. Still that hat and the bill of the landlord made out in his own name prove at least that he must have returned to Paris. Why should he return? What was the motive? However, I have despatched an agent of the secret police to Strasburg, to track his steps from that place. When I hear anything I will send for you."

On arriving at Strasburg, the police agent at once repaired to the Maison Rouge. The landlord perfectly remembered the baron's having stayed at his hotel for a week, and having then gone, whither he could not say. The porter, however, remembered where his luggage was taken. It was to a house outside the city, on the road to Saverne, where a hired carriage was in readiness. He got into the carriage and drove off. But as the driver was an acquaintance of the porter's, it was no difficult matter to find him. He remembered the job perfectly, but averred that the gentleman's name was Thionville. He should not perhaps have paid much attention to this fact, had he not had a sister living at Saverne as chambermaid in the same hotel to which he drove his fare. On inquiring at Saverne, the agent found that a Monsieur Thionville had arrived at the hotel as stated, and that he had remained there four days, during the greater part of which he had kept in-doors, from indisposition.

The description the landlord gave of his person and luggage left no doubt on the agent's mind that he was on the right track. But nothing further could be learnt. Still, one important circumstance had been proved—namely, that, instead of proceeding on his journey to Russia, he had turned back on the road to Paris, under an assumed name.

The only thing that now remained to be done was to put an advertisement in the French and German papers, inviting the husband of the murdered lady to repair to Paris, in order to claim the property of his deceased wife. For, it was argued, if he had murdered her for the sake of getting possession of her money, it was very probable that he would take the bait now held out. Neither did this surmise prove to be incorrect.

Two months, or thereabouts, had elapsed, and the police were beginning to despair of getting further tidings of the baron, when a gentleman, attired in deep mourning, and apparently bowed down with grief, presented himself at the bureau of the police. "He had," he said, "by chance seen the fearful tidings of his wife's murder in a paper at St. Petersburg, and had hastened back to Paris as quickly as he could. The shock, however, it had caused him had brought on a severe attack of illness, from which he had only just recovered, otherwise he should have returned to Paris some weeks sooner."

Acting in obedience to the orders of his chief, the agent referred the baron to a comptoir, where he would be furnished with the register of the death and burial of his wife.

On entering the room, the baron was politely invited to take a seat while the necessary papers were being found.

After the lapse of a quarter of an hour an official entered the room, and requested the baron to accompany him to another comptoir, where, to his dismay, he found himself submitted to a rigorous examination.

"But, Monsieur le Baron, when you left home, on March 25, whither did you travel?" asked the chief officer.

"I travelled through Germany, en route for St. Petersburg."

"Good! But which was the first town at which you stayed?"

"Strasburg!"

"Quite true!" said his questioner, referring to some papers. "On what day did you arrive there?"

"On the 28th."

"Yes! and how long did you remain?"

"Let me see—yes! it was one night and half the next day," replied the baron, with a little hesitation in his manner.

"And where did you proceed to next?" resumed the officer.

After some reflection, the baron answered that he had gone to Frankfort.

"Indeed!" answered the officer, raising his eyes, and directing a steady glance towards the baron. "To Frankfort! I think you are mistaken. You say you arrived at Strasburg on the 28th, where you remained till the following day. But the landlord of the Maison Rouge says that you remained at his house till April 7. How do you account for that, Monsieur le Baron?"

"Was I there a week? Yes! now I think of it, you are quite right, monsieur; for I met several friends there, who persuaded me to lengthen my stay."

"You also state that you next went to Frankfort. But if Monsieur le Baron reflects, he will remember that he went to Saverne in a close carriage."

"Yes; but that was only a day's trip, and had nothing to do with my journey," was the ready answer. "But may I ask, monsieur, why all these questions?"

"Excuse me, Monsieur le Baron, you are here to answer questions not to ask them. Suffice it to say, it is usual under such circumstances. Now, please to attend. You

said just now it was only a day's trip, I think; how was it you came to stay four days at Saverne?"

"I had only intended to remain one day at Saverne, but was taken ill during my stay at the hotel."

"Was that why Monsieur le Baron changed his name?" continued the officer.

"Changed my name? Monsieur must be in error."

"Not at all. You took the name of Thionville, for some reason best known to yourself. But as you seem to have forgotten this circumstance, will you have the goodness to tell us where you went on leaving Saverne?"

"I returned to Strasburg."

"Pardon me, Monsieur le Baron, and allow me to refresh your memory. You went, or pretended to go, to a private house in the neighbourhood. But was not Paris the goal of your journey, and did you not arrive here about April 15?"

"Monsieur!" exclaimed the baron, "I have submitted to these impertinent questions quite long enough. By what right you presume to interrogate me in the manner you have done, I do not know. Rest assured I shall represent the matter to the Minister of Police. I wish you a very good morning!" And the baron turned himself round to leave the room.

"Not so fast, monsieur. I have not yet done with you," continued the officer, without noticing the interruption. "I repeat—you arrived in Paris about the 15th, and you were in your wife's bedroom on the night of the 15th and 16th."

At these words the baron leaped to his feet, his face distorted with the pangs of fear and passion.

"Calm yourself, Monsieur le Baron, I have not finished with you yet. Will you then explain, if you were not in the bedroom of your wife on the night in question—which you will remember was the very night on which she was murdered—how it was your hat was found in the passage?" And with these words he handed a hat to the baron.

All eyes were bent upon him. The baron turned deadly pale, and remained speechless for a considerable time. At last he stammered forth incoherently:

"It is not my hat. I never saw this one before. . . . I had one like it . . . but not this."

"Not this?" exclaimed the relentless questioner. "Monsieur le Baron, you have been followed step by step from the day you quitted Paris, to the day you returned. If this hat be not yours, then have the goodness to tell me how your bill incurred at the Maison Rouge, Strasburg, found its way underneath the lining? Please to look for yourself."

"Hotel bill!" gasped the baron, as he struck his forehead with his clenched hand.

"Yes! wretched man. By that little piece of paper, Providence has disclosed your crime, and has prevented an innocent girl from dying a felon's death. Confess that you entered your wife's room and committed the diabolical deed for which you would have allowed another to suffer."

But such a confession was never made.

That night Baron de C. was safely shut up in prison till his trial should take place. All Paris rang with the news that the real murderer of the baroness had been discovered, and that he was no other than her own husband. But that night the prisoner escaped. On entering the cell on the following morning, he was found lying stretched out on his couch, cold and stiff. It was supposed that, living a lawless life, he had been in the habit of carrying poison about him.

Years have elapsed since the above events took place. Monsieur Bernard soon became one of the most celebrated ornaments of the French bar, and his wife, née Ernestine Lamont, noted not only for the brilliancy of her balls and dinners, but for the affability of her manner and the courteousness of her disposition. Of the story of the murder nobody knows more than is here told.

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HALF A MILLION OF MONEY.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "BARBARA'S HISTORY."

CHAPTER XL. THE CAUSE OF LIBERTY.

HAD Saxon been suddenly plunged into a cold bath, it could scarcely have brought him to his senses more rapidly than did the remembrance of his broken pledge, and the thought of what his lawyer cousin would say to him.

"It isn't as if he hadn't cautioned me, either," said he, half aloud, as he sat himself down, "quite chopfallen," at the foot of a great oak, in an unfrequented hollow of the park. And then one unpleasant recollection evoked another, and he remembered how William Trefalden had joked with him about fetters of flowers, and made him almost angry by so doing; and how he had boasted of himself as more invulnerable than Achilles. He also remembered that his cousin had especially inquired whether he had not yet been called upon to subscribe to the Italian fund, and had given him much good advice as to what his conduct should be when that emergency might arise. To put his name down for a moderate sum, and commit himself to nothing further—those were William Trefalden's instructions to him; but how had he observed them? How had he observed that other promise of signing no more large cheques without consulting his cousin; and what reliance would his cousin place upon his promises in the future?

Saxon groaned in spirit as he thought of these things; and the more he thought of them, the more uncomfortable he became.

He did not care in the least about the money, although he had, in truth, been mulcted of an enormous sum; but he cared a great deal about breaking his word, and he saw that it must be broken on the one hand or the other. He also saw on which hand it was to be.

He had given the cheque to Miss Colonna, and Miss Colonna must have the money; there was clearly no help for that. But then he entertained misgivings as to the cheque itself, and began to doubt whether he had anything like balance enough at his banker's to meet it. In this case, what was to be done? The money, of course, must be got; but who was to get it, and how was the getting of it to be achieved? Would that mysterious process called "selling out" have to be gone through?

Saxon puzzled his brains over those abstruse financial questions till his head ached; but could make nothing of them. At last he came to the very disagreeable conclusion that William Trefalden was alone capable of solving the difficulty, and must be consulted without delay; but, at the same time, he did not feel at all sure that his cousin might not flatly refuse to help him in the matter. This was a fearful supposition, and almost drove the young fellow to despair. For Saxon loved the lawyer in his simple honest way—not so much, perhaps, for any lovable qualities that he might imagine him to possess, as for the mere fact that his cousin was his cousin, and he trusted him. He had also a vague idea that William Trefalden had done a great deal to serve him, and that he owed him a profound debt of gratitude. Anyhow, he would not offend him for the universe—and yet he was quite resolved that Miss Colonna should have the full benefit of her cheque.

Thinking thus, he remembered that he had authorised her to double the amount. What if she should take him at his word?

"By Jove, then," said he, addressing a plump rabbit that had been gravely watching him from a convenient distance for some minutes past, "I can't help it, if she does. The money's my own, after all, and I have the right to give it away, if I choose. Besides, I've given it in the cause of liberty!"

But his heart told him that liberty had played a very unimportant part in the transaction.

CHAPTER XLI. A COUNCIL OF WAR.

IN the mean while, a general council was being held in the octagon turret. The councillors were Signor Colonna, Lord Castletowers, and Major Vaughan, and the subjects under discussion were Baldiserotti's despatch and Saxon Trefalden's cheque.

The despatch was undoubtedly an important one, and contained more stirring news than any which had transpired from Italy since the Napoleonic campaign; but that other document, with its startling array of numerals, was certainly not less momentous. In Major Vaughan's opinion it was the more momentous of the two; and yet his brow darkened over it, and it seemed to the

two others that he was not altogether so well pleased as he might have been.

Castletowers was genuinely delighted, and as much surprised as delighted.

"It is a noble gift," said he. "I had not dreamed that Trefalden was so staunch a friend to the cause."

"I was not aware that Mr. Trefalden had hitherto interested himself about Italy in any way," observed Major Vaughan, coldly.

"Well, he has interested himself now to some purpose. Besides, he has but just come into his fortune."

Signor Colonna smoothed the cheque as it lay before him on the desk, filled in the date, crossed it, and inserted his own name as that of the person to whom it was payable.

"I wonder what I had better do with it," said he, thoughtfully.

"With what?" asked the Earl.

Colonna pointed to the cheque with the feather end of his pen.

"Why, cash it, of course, and send the money off without delay."

The Italian smiled and shook his head. He was a better man of business than his host, and he foresaw some of those very difficulties which were the cause of so much perplexity to Saxon himself.

"It is not always easy to cash large sums," said he. "I must speak to Mr. Trefalden before I do anything with his cheque. Is he in the house?"

To which the Earl replied that he would see; and left the room.

After he was gone, Vaughan and Colonna went back to the despatch, and discussed the position of affairs in Sicily. Thence they passed on to the question of supplies, and consulted about the best means of bestowing Saxon's donation. At last they agreed that the larger share should be sent out in money, and the rest expended on munitions of war.

"It's a heavy sum," said the dragoon. "If you want a messenger to take it over, I am at your service."

"Thanks. Can you go the day after to-morrow?"

"To-night, if you like. My time is all my own just now. By the way, who is Mr. Trefalden's banker?"

He put out his hand for the cheque as he said this, and Colonna could not do otherwise than pass it to him. After examining it for some moments in silence, he gave it back, and said:

"Are those his figures, Signor Colonna? I see they are not yours."

To which the Italian replied very composedly, "No, they are Olimpia's."

Major Vaughan rose, and walked over to the window.

"I shall ask Bertaldi to give me something to do, when I am out there," he said, after a brief pause. "I have had no fighting since I came back from India, and I am tired to death of this do-nothing life."

"Bertaldi will be only too glad," replied Colonna. "One experienced officer is worth more to us now than a squadron of recruits."

The dragoon sighed impatiently, and pulled at the ends of his moustache. It was a habit he had when he was ill at ease.

"I'm sorry for Castletowers," he said, presently. "He'd give his right hand to go over with me, and have a shot at the Neapolitans."

"I know he would; but it cannot be—it must not be. I would not countenance his going for the world," replied the Italian, quickly. "It would break his mother's heart."

"It never entered into the sphere of my calculations that Lady Castletowers had a heart," said Major Vaughan. "But you have enjoyed the advantage of her acquaintance longer than I have, so I defer to your better judgment."

At this moment the door opened, and the Earl came in alone.

"I can't find Trefalden anywhere," said he. "I have looked for him all over the house, in the stables, and all through the gardens. He was last seen on the terrace, talking to Miss Colonna, and nobody knows what has become of him since."

"He's somewhere in the park, of course," said Colonna.

"I don't think so. I met my mother as I came in. She has been wandering about the park all the morning, and has not seen him."

"If I were you, Castletowers, I'd have the Slane dragged," said Major Vaughan, with a short, hard laugh. "He has repented of that cheque, and drowned himself in a paroxysm of despair."

"What nonsense!" said Colonna, almost angrily; but he thought it odd, for all that, and so did the Earl.

CHAPTER XLII. THE MAUSOLEUM.

There was a very curious object in Castletowers Park, the shape of which was like a watchman's lantern, and the material blue granite. It stood on a little eminence in a retired corner of the domain, was approached by a double row of dwarf cypresses, about three feet and a half in height, and enshrined the last mortal remains of a favourite hunter belonging to the late Earl. It was called "The Mausoleum."

A more hopelessly ugly edifice it would be difficult to conceive; but the late Earl had intended it to be a model of elegant simplicity, and had wasted some hundreds upon it. Being abroad when his old horse died, he scrawled a rough outline of the Temple of Vesta on a sheet of foreign note-paper, and sent it up to his steward, with instructions to hand it over for execution to a Guildford stonemason. But the Earl was no draughtsman, and the stonemason, who had never heard of the Temple of Vesta in his life, was no genius; and thus it happened that the park at Castletowers came to be disfigured by an architectural phenomenon compared with which the toll-houses on Waterloo

Bridge were chaste and classic structures. The Earl, however, died at Naples, in happy ignorance of the deed that had been done, and his successor had not thought it worth while to pull the building down.

When Saxon rose from his seat under the great oak, it was yet so early that he was tempted to prolong his walk. So he went rambling on among the ferns, watching the rabbits, and thinking of Miss Colonna, till he found himself, quite suddenly, at the foot of the little eminence on which the mausoleum was built.

It so happened that, although he had been more than ten days at Castletowers, he had never before strayed into this particular corner of the park. The phenomenon was consequently a novelty in his eyes, and he walked round it wonderingly, contemplating its ugliness from every side. He then went up and tried the door, which was painted to look like green bronze, and studded all over with great sexagonal bosses. It swung back, however, quite easily, and Saxon walked in.

The place was so dark, and the day outside was so brilliant, that for the first few moments he could see nothing distinctly. At length a dumpy pillar on a massive square base came into view in the centre of the building, and Saxon saw by the inscription carved upon it (in very indifferent Latin) that the object of all this costly deformity was a horse. And then he sat down on the base of the column, and contemplated the mausoleum from within.

It was, if possible, uglier inside than outside; that is to say, the resemblance to a lantern was more perfect. The dumpy column looked exactly like a gigantic candle, and the very walls were panelled in granite in a way that suggested glass to the least imaginative observer. Had the stonemason possessed but a single grain of original genius, he would have added a fine bold handle in solid granite to the outside, and made the thing complete.

While Saxon was thinking thus, and lazily criticising the late Earl's Latin, he suddenly became aware of a lady coming slowly up between the cypresses.

He thought at first that the lady was Miss Colonna, and was on the point of stepping out to meet her; but in almost the same instant he saw that she was a stranger. She was looking down as she walked, with her face so bowed that he could not see her features distinctly; but her figure was more girlish than Miss Colonna's, and her step more timid and hesitating. She seemed almost as if she were counting the daisies in the grass as she came along.

Saxon scarcely knew what to do. He had risen from his seat, and now stood a little way back in the deep shadow of the mausoleum. While he was yet hesitating whether to come forward or remain where he was, the young lady paused and looked round, as if expecting some one.

She had no sooner lifted up her face than Saxon remembered to have seen it before. He could not for his life tell when or where; but he was as confident of the fact as if every circumstance connected with it were fresh in his memory.

She was very fair of complexion, with soft brown hair, and large childlike brown eyes—eyes with just that sort of startled, pathetic expression about them which one sees in the eyes of a caged chamois. Saxon remembered even that look in them—remembered how that image of the caged chamois had presented itself to him when he saw them first—and then, all at once, there flashed upon him the picture of a railway station, an empty train, and a group of three persons standing beside the open door of a second-class carriage.

Yes; he recollected all about it now, even to the amount he had paid for her fare, and the fact that the lost ticket had been taken from Sedgebrook station. Involuntarily, he drew back still further into the gloom of the mausoleum. He would not have shown himself, or have put himself in the way of being thanked, or paid, for the world.

Then she sighed, as if she were weary or disappointed, and came a few steps nearer; and as she continued to advance, Saxon continued to retreat, till she was nearly at the door of the mausoleum, and he had got quite round behind the pillar. It was like a scene upon a stage; only that in this instance the actors were improvising their parts, and there were no spectators to see them.

Just as he was speculating upon what he should do if she came in, and asking himself whether it would not be better, even now, to walk boldly out and risk the chances of recognition, the young lady decided the question for him by sitting down on the threshold of the building.

Saxon was out of his perplexity now. He was a prisoner, it was true; but his time was all his own, and he could afford to waste it in peeping from behind a pillar at the back of a young lady's bonnet. Besides, there was an air of adventure about the proceeding that was quite delightful, as far as it went.

So he kept very quiet, scarcely daring to breathe for fear of alarming her, and amused himself by conjecturing what imaginable business could bring Miss Rivière of Camberwell to this particular corner of Castletowers Park. Was it possible, for instance, that the Earl had been insane enough to have the phenomenon photographed, and was she about to colour the photograph on the spot? The idea was too monstrous to be entertained for a moment. And then the young lady sighed again—such a deep-drawn, tremulous, melancholy sigh, that Saxon's heart ached to hear it.

It was no sigh of mere fatigue. Unlearned as he was in man and womankind, he knew at once that such a sigh could only come from a heart heavily laden. And so he fell to wondering what her trouble could be, and whether he could help, in any anonymous way, to lighten

it for her. What if he sent her a hundred-pound note in a blank envelope? She looked poor, and even if

But at this point his meditations were broken in upon. A shadow darkened the doorway; Miss Rivière rose from her seat upon the threshold; and Lady Castletowers stood suddenly before Saxon's astonished eyes.

CHAPTER XLIII. WHAT SAXON HEARD IN THE MAUSOLEUM.

Lady Castletowers was the first to speak; and her voice, when she spoke, was measured and haughty.

"You have requested to see me again, Miss Rivière," she said.

"I have been compelled to do so," was the almost inaudible reply.

"And I have come here at your request."

Lady Castletowers paused, as if for some acknowledgment of her condescension in having done so; but no acknowledgment came.

"I must, however, beg you to understand quite distinctly that it is for the last time," she said, presently. "It is impossible that I should hold any future communication with you otherwise than by letter, and then only at stated periods, as heretofore."

The young lady murmured something of which Saxon could not distinguish a syllable.

"Then you will oblige me by saying it at once, and as briefly as possible," replied Lady Castletowers.

Saxon felt very uncomfortable. He knew that he ought not to be there. He knew this to be a strictly private conversation, and was quite aware that he ought not to overhear it; and yet what was he to do? He could still walk out, it was true, and explain his involuntary imprisonment; but he had an instinctive feeling that Lady Castletowers would not have come to meet Miss Rivière in the park if she had not wished to keep the meeting secret, and that his presence there, however well he might apologise for it, would cause her ladyship a very disagreeable surprise. Or he might stop his ears, and so be, virtually, as far away as in his London chambers; but then he felt certain that this young girl whom he had assisted once before, was now in some great trouble, and he longed to know what that trouble was, that he might assist her again. So, as these thoughts flashed through his mind, Saxon concluded to stay where he was, and not to stop his ears—at least for the present.

Lady Castletowers had requested Miss Rivière to state her business at once, and also to state it briefly; but it seemed as if the task were strangely difficult, for the girl still hesitated.

At length she said, with a kind of sob:

"Lady Castletowers, my mother is very ill."

And then Saxon could see that she was weeping.

"Do you mean that your mother is dying?" asked the Countess, coldly.

"No; but that she must die, if the necessary means are not taken to save her."

"What do you mean by the necessary means?"

"Doctor Fisher says that she must go to some place on the Italian coast—to Nice, or Mentone," replied the girl, making a great effort to steady her voice, and keep her tears from falling. "He thinks she may live there for years, with care and proper treatment; but"

"Why not here, with care and proper treatment?" said Lady Castletowers.

"He says this variable climate is killing her—that she is dying day by day, as long as she remains in it."

"It is her native climate," said Lady Castletowers.

"Yes—but she was so young when she left it; and she has lived so many, many years of her life abroad."

"Well?"

The girl lifted up her face, all pale and tearful as it was, and looked at her—just looked at her—but said never a word. It was not an indignant look—nor an imploring look—nor even a reproachful look; but it was, at all events, a look that Lady Castletowers seemed to understand, for she replied to it, and the reply, though spoken as haughtily as ever, had in it something of the nature of an apology.

"You are aware," she said, "that your mother's annuity is paid out of my own private means, and without my son's knowledge. And my private means are very small. So small, that I find it difficult to meet even this obligation, inconsiderable as it is."

"But you will not let her die, Lady Castletowers! You cannot—you will not let her die!"

And the young girl wrung her hands together, in the passionate earnestness of her appeal.

Lady Castletowers looked down, and seemed as if she were tracing patterns on the turf with the end of her parasol.

"What sum do you require?" she said, slowly.

"Doctor Fisher said about thirty pounds . . ."

"Impossible. I will try to give you twenty pounds for this purpose—in fact, I will promise you twenty pounds; but I cannot do more."

Miss Rivière was about to speak; but the Countess slightly raised her hand, and checked the words upon her lips.

"The annuity," she said, "shall be paid, as usual, into the hands of whatever foreign banker you may indicate; but I beg you both to understand that I must be troubled with no more applications of this kind."

The girl's cheek glowed with sudden indignation.

"You will be troubled with none, madam," she said. "Had there been any other person in the world to whom I could have applied for aid, I should not have claimed your assistance now."

Her eye dilated, and her lip trembled, and she said it firmly and proudly—as proudly as Lady

Castletowers herself might have done. But the Countess passed her as if she had not spoken, and swept down the little avenue of cypresses, without taking any further notice of her presence.

Miss Rivière continued to stand in the same proud attitude till the last gleam of her ladyship's silken skirts had disappeared among the trees. And then her strength suddenly gave way, and she sat down again upon the gloomy threshold, and sobbed as if her heart were breaking.

OCEAN SWELLS.

If the quiet steady-going fishes of our coasts and rivers could see some of their brethren and relatives in the Eastern seas, they would be a little astonished, always supposing they are capable—as I maintain they are—of such a sensation. English fish—a few dandies, such as the gold and silver carp excepted, and they really belong to China—are attired in sober colours, like well-dressed English folks; but these "swells of the ocean" blaze out in all the hues of the rainbow and in divers others; orange and red; yellow and black; green and lake; blue, purple, pink, and yellow. Bright sea-green and yellow are perpetually seen in the same vestment, and one very heavy swell may now and then be beheld in yellow, blue, red, green, black, and grey. The dorsal fin is often marked with as many as four colours, and to heighten the effect of all this splendour, the hues are generally of the most brilliant character. Nor are these the exceptions. Our fish now and then offer a few eccentricities of shape and colour. Anglers who go hauling up great congers off the Channel Islands, and sharp-set young sharks in the Irish Sea; enthusiastic naturalists prowling about in bright summer mornings and golden autumn days, dredging up irritable star-fish, who commit suicide by explosion; such explorers stealing into still lonely nooks, to peer under the olive-brown sea-wrack for the spotted goby and velvet fiddler, now and then see some strange creature caught after a heavy storm in some far-away spot; but in the Indian Archipelago all seems wonderful together. So soon as a family of fish gets into these enchanted waters it begins to

> suffer a sea change
> Into some rich thing and strange.

Nor is it in colour alone, but in pattern also, that they come out so strong. Instead of being content with a sprinkling of bars and spots, like a little well-appointed jewellery, they are crossed and spotted, marbled and streaked, from head to tail. Some, have patterns like flowers on their armour; others, have chains of oval spots with scrolls bordering them like an indented moulding; and then come others with flourishes, twists, and grotesque figures, for which it is not easy to find suitable names.

A Dutch naturalist, Dr. Bleeker, a physician, with something like twenty titles, is now publishing a gallery of portraits of fish found in the waters of the Indian Archipelago. The work is an honour to the author and his country.

There was a fish called the scarus, for which those gormandising old thieves, the wealthy Romans, used to pay immense prices, and which they transported with immense care from the Ægean Sea to their fish-ponds and stews, there to fatten for the dinner-table.

Dr. Bleeker paints for us scari that swarm in the waters round Celebes, Java, and the Molucca Islands. This fish, once so highly prized, is considered by the Europeans in the East so worthless that it is never seen on their tables, being given up to the natives and the Chinese, who will eat anything. One species alone, the green pseudoscarus, now and then appears in the bill of fare, but it is not thought much of.

It would be too much of a good thing to describe all the species of this family, for there are scores of them. All that can be done is to single out one or two, which, however, of course but imperfectly represent so large a group. We will select the pseudoscarus tricolor as a specimen. In this beautiful fish the upper part of the head and the back are deep blue, shading down into black; the greater part of the side is of bright sky blue, while the colour beneath is a pale Indian red; the hind part and tail are of a rich rose colour. The dorsal fin bears at its free edge a stripe of blue, then comes a broad band of rose; below this, is a narrow strip of blue, and again a line of pale rose. The ventral fin is of rose colour, inclining to yellow; the pectoral fin is yellow and black. The eye is of a bright yellow, and round the lips runs a delicate stripe of red.

The dorsal fin is often very beautiful in the scari. Nothing can exceed the tints of the pale blue and rose bars, the yellow and rosy green, the Indian red and port wine hue, the salmon colour, the pink and lilac. Sometimes, the bars are spotted with strongly-contrasted colours, as, for instance, pink bars with blue or green spots. The head is often beautifully marbled with irregularly curved narrow bars of some colour, as, for instance, damask, green, red, lilac, or black, which is strongly relieved by the ground. The tail is frequently streaked or barred with blue, lake, and green, dark red, rose colour, and yellow. The flower-like patterns on the scales are very well marked in some scari, beginning just below the root of the dorsal fin, and running in a line from this spot towards the tail.

The most striking thing about these fish is the strong resemblance of the head to that of a parrot: owing to which, and the brilliancy of their colouring, they have been generally called "parrot fish." One member of the family (the pseudoscarus microrrhinus) is so like the parrot about the head, that at first sight it looks as if the waters of the ocean were displaying a paradox as strange in its way as the rivers of Australia exhibit in the water-mole. The great circular brown eye, the iris bordered with yellow, the dark green cheek, and the

obtuse shape of the head, strongly remind one of the parrot. The mouth in all these fish is very like a beak. Nor is this any forced comparison; it is owing to the teeth and jaws being all fused into one, and the effect of this is heightened by the rostral lip covering the jaw to a great extent, while the maxillary or internal lip is reduced to a mere slip of membrane. Oken, the German naturalist who according to his own account was inspired, and who had scarcely established a theory before he began to perceive the absolute necessity for immediately overturning it, lumped all the scari together under the name of "insect fish"—for what reason it is difficult to surmise. As a natural sequel, he afterwards elevated both them and the next family the reader will come to in this paper (the labroids), to the rank of "bird fish." Some of the old writers, with equal accuracy, described the scarus as a fish that feedeth on herbs and cheweth the cud like a beast—an idea to which still later writers clung, calling it the ruminant among fishes; the fact is, that the scarus, though it feeds upon the sea-algæ, also eats the molluscs and polypi; for which reason the fishermen take it in bamboo creels set among the roots of the polypi; never finding it in their large drag-nets at sea. It is restricted to such articles of diet by the strange conformation of the mouth, which, though strong, is too small to allow of the seizing of large fish. In order to masticate this rather tough food in comfort and safety, the scarus is furnished with teeth in the upper part of its gullet.

Next to the scari come the labroids, the name being taken from the labrum, a fish mentioned by Pliny, and rather vaguely described as a kind of ravenous fish, seeing that every fish is by nature utterly and entirely ravenous. The elegant trout who flies in the wildest terror if you show the tip of your nose, will eat nearly his own weight of bleak and dace on a hot still June evening. A pike has been known to rush at a fish well-nigh the size of himself, and even to dash at a mule's nose! I have known a fishing-frog lose its life in an insane attempt to swallow a wooden scoop, the proprietor of which objected to the proceeding. It is but a short time since an account appeared in the Times of a fish which had swallowed, among other matters, two broken bottles, a quart pot, a sheep's head, a triangular piece of earthenware, and a lobster, while in its liver the spine of a skate was comfortably embedded! These labroids are fish with a free upper lip, which, like the lower one, looks in some species as if the animal had just been severely stung by some spiteful jelly-fish; the jaws in certain species are shaped like those of a pig. There is frequently a long spine at the beginning of the dorsal fin. One of their most distinguishing marks, in the eye of a naturalist, is, that they possess a three-cornered or narrow gullet bone, set with grain-like or globular teeth. The gilt-head, the bass, and the wrasse may be familiar specimens to many readers. If there be fish more beautiful and strangely coloured than the scari, we find them here. Some of the blues and reds, the rose and orange tints, are marvels; and yet it is hard to say whether some of the dark-coloured fish are not even more to be admired than the showy ones. Dr. Bleeker has added more than a hundred new species, and each species is a study in itself. I will confine myself to one, and select for description the iulis lunaris, or the crescent-tailed wrasse. The head is dark green, beautifully marked with bent irregular bars of a damask colour; the body is of a lighter green, with narrow rose-coloured bars cutting each scale vertically. The dorsal fin is bright yellow at the top; below this, it is bright blue; beneath this, it is deep rose, and again blue. The fin underneath, is damask, blue, and bright yellow; from its beginning run two rose-coloured bars, extending as far as the head. The tail, which curves broadly outwards, and ends in two long points which then bend towards each other like the limbs of a pair of old-fashioned compasses, is of bright yellow in the middle; outside this, it is coloured Indian red; outside of all, it is streaked with a pale blue. It is a finely-proportioned fish, about the build of a well grown dace, and is found over a wide extent of water.

Like the scari, these fish are not valued for their flavour. Except a few species of a pale gold colour, with remarkably large red spots (the hemipleronoti), which in the Molucca Islands are called ikkan bokki, or "fish of the princess," on account of their delicate flavour, they are rarely eaten, except by natives and Chinese. Here, the classical schoolboy will of course interfere, and tell us that the lupus, or sea-dace of the Romans, one of this family and an inhabitant of the Mediterranean, was greatly esteemed for its flavour. Don't believe it. You will find it like a bad roach, and a poor earthy fish. The princess's fish live at such great depths that they can never be extensively made use of, or sold at a reasonable price. Out of the hundred and twenty-six species now known—seventy-nine of which have been discovered by Dr. Bleeker—only five contribute in any material degree to the food of the people.

The labroids are followed by the silurians, something between a salmon and a pike, with beards and without scales; great creatures with a fleshy eel-like look, and a fat fin on the hinder part of the back. Every person who is a member of the Acclimatisation Society, or the Thames Angling Association, or who has a friend who is a member of either, or who has taken any interest in the proceedings of these capital institutions, has heard of the silurus, which, if it thrive here as it is said to do in Hungary, will have to be caught with a cod-line, and be hoisted out with a steam-crane. If the reader wants to see a few species, he can gratify his taste in Dr. Bleeker's work. These fish swarm in the waters of Borneo and Sumatra, not only in the sweet and brackish water, but even in the seas, and the laborious naturalist

has taken their likenesses by the dozen. A great many of them are anything but attractive, and I don't think there will be much to regret if the silurus can never be induced to live in England. We have neither room nor food for him, so let him stay where he is. Besides, what is the use of angling for such a fish? Who in his senses *can* want to catch a great brute of a thing, as heavy as a jackass, and capable of eating children, as the silurus is said repeatedly to have done? There is one comfort, however, the silurus, if it really lived formerly in our rivers, as it is said to have done, left of its own accord, and that is a pretty good proof that the locality did not agree with it, and is not likely to do so.

Though beauty is not the rule among these Eastern silurians, there are exceptions. Some of them are of a lovely grass-green colour—as the arius, for instance; the salmon gold of one species, the pale green of another, and the gold green of the batrachocephalus, being equally fine; the small-headed pseudarius is also a fine specimen. Many are stippled with gold about the head; the ariodes is very elegantly marked in this way. The beard, too, is of a beautiful hue. The dorsal fin, with its remarkably strong spine in front, and sloping sharply backward towards the tail, with the three fins in a line beneath, give some of these fish a very striking appearance. One species (the hexanematrichthys) is barred from head to tail with what seem to be sunbeams.

Some of the silurians are remarkably humpbacked. The reader is doubtless familiar with the appearance of certain consequential-looking fish,* as round as a ball and as deep as they are long. But from these downward in successive descent to the straight-backed eel, there is always something like symmetry; the great spinal curvature rises and falls with an equable sweep. This is not the case with the silurian humpbacks, for they look as if the spine had been badly broken in two places. There is one species (the bagrichthys) in which this singular feature is developed to an extraordinary degree, and is, moreover, coupled with other peculiarities which make it, in many respects, one of the strangest-looking of fish. The back rises almost perpendicularly from the head; and from the highest point of this hump issues a dorsal fin, which seems especially designed to get this unhappy-looking animal into difficulties, being *free* and seven inches long, only an inch wide at the base, and narrowing so rapidly, that through the greater part of its length it is not more than an inch in width, looking on the whole somewhat like a half quill trimmed very close. From the hinder part of this strange fin towards the tail, the back is concave, which gives it a singularly weak and ugly look. In this hollow is laid a long oval mass, or fin, of fat (adipeuse), which not only fills up the vacuity, but even gives the outline a convex form; as it is distinctly seen to be superimposed, a dead load laid upon the backbone, it is an additional ugliness. From each point of the tail waves a narrow streamer of cartilage, not much thicker than packthread, and nearly three inches long. All this, with its peculiar claret colour, looking in places as if it had been washed out, its queer little short thick head, and the oval fin in the middle of its body, give it a remarkably odd look.

Another very unusual feature in some of them (as the leiocassis, &c.) is a narrow straight bar of a bright gold colour, running from the head to the tail, where it suddenly bends upward to the end of the backbone. The beard, too, is singularly developed in some of these fish. The wallago has streamers extending from the upper jaw, half way to the tail; they are not thicker at the thickest part than whipcord, and taper away till they become mere threads. One little fellow (a silurichthys) has a long beard waving from both upper and lower jaws, and one small silurodes has a beard almost as long as himself, projecting from his lower jaws, and arching away high over his back in graceful waves towards his tail: while in the hemibagrius the beard is actually as long as the creature to which it appertains. Some of these beards, as that of the plotosus, for instance, are most delicately coloured; in the bagarius, the cartilages of which it is formed are very elegant. Indeed, this fish possesses some peculiarly attractive features; the height and bold sweep backward of its dorsal fin, its compact but slender form and elegant head, and the tail arched like a lancet-headed window, striking the eye of the most unobservant.

The silurians do not contribute much to the luxuries of the table. The natives and Chinese prize them because they afford cheap and nutritious food, but they are not sought after by those who can afford to live well. Some river species are eaten by the Europeans, but there is no mania for them. The plotosi are liked, but their spines are apt to give very troublesome wounds to those who dress them, often occasioning locked-jaw and abscesses; the natives attribute this to the cartilage being poisonous, but it is due to its brittleness, as the spines, which are very sharp, penetrate deep, and being very fragile, easily break off and remain in the wound.

There is little in the cyprinæ to detain us very long. Any person who wishes to see particularly stuck-up fish, is recommended to look at the likenesses of some of the puntius race; little, petulant creatures, as deep as they are long, and into which one would think the spirits of so many defunct parish beadles must have migrated.

Until Dr. Bleeker took up the subject, only thirty-four species of cyprinoids were known. He has raised the number to a hundred and nineteen; but his discoveries, though deeply interesting to the naturalist, have contributed little to benefit the human race, for these fish are almost useless as food; some of them being too rare, others too small. The yellow-finned

* Such as the ephippus, platax, &c.

carp alone comes in for a small modicum of praise, but it is merely naturalised at Java, being only found in some rivers of the western provinces. A few species, such as the rohita, morulus, and lobocheilus, are sufficiently numerous and large to be useful in this way, and that is all. The labeobarbi are eaten in some places; in others, the people prefer worshipping them.

As we are now to bid good-bye to fish of this class, and enter upon the acquaintance of a family distinguished by a totally different form and look, and to which the following remarks would be in no degree applicable—the eels—it is here necessary, in justice to Dr. Bleeker, to say that his likenesses, so far, exhibit one feature which must go far to raise the artist in the estimation of all those interested in the character of the finny tribe. This feature is the almost entire absence of that lugubrious, fretful expression of face we see in all portraits of fish. Let the artist be who or what he may, the unhappy fish looks as if he were given up to hopeless misanthropy. In Cuvier's great work you will not find a fish that does not seem as utterly sick of the world, as a man who has invested his all in bad accommodation-bills and married a drunken wife.

There are people who like fishing for eels, who think there are worse things than to sit in some out-of-the-way nook, shady and quiet, by a deep pool where the brown heathy river eddies and swirls softly by the steep bank, watching the float swim away, going down sharply as the hungry fish tug at the tough bright red worms; there are people who have fished in the dark Scotch lochs for the great dangerous-looking eels that live deep in their silent waters; or in still moats by old granges, where the hinds catch them with whip-cord lines and fishing-rods like great flails, throwing all their rude energies into the pastime, tugging at the rod when a fish strikes as if they would root up a tree, flinging the eels, when they catch them, over the nearest hay-stack, and when they miss, shouting, "Dammun, ah thowt ah heddun theer." There are other people too who love to angle with a hand-line on breezy October days for conger off the Forelands. Some of these good folks may possibly have got tired of always having the same thing, and would like a change in the way of eel fishing? If so, they have only to go to Borneo, Sumatra, Java, and a few other places mentioned by Dr. Bleeker, to find variety enough. Such eels! Purple, green, gold, and golden brown; spotted, striped, barred, and marbled; eels in such hosts that we can only stay to speak of a few.

The first of Dr. Bleeker's eels (the aphthalmichthys abbreviatus) is a creature some eighteen inches long, and not more than a third of an inch wide; of a beautiful purple on the back, and gold colour below, with a row of tiny symmetrical spots running along each side from the head to the tail. Then there is a fierce spotted eel (the muræna maculata), some two feet long and an inch and a half deep, with a long powerful dorsal fin, a file of sharp teeth, and a bright blue eye. It is wonderfully marbled, quite a picture; coloured dark green, pale green, and purple. Then there is a beautiful eel, with dark green back and bright green belly, with a golden dorsal fin, which is prolonged over the tail, and then runs along underneath the body. Then there is (I wish there wasn't) the aphthalmichthys javanicus, of a most gorgeous green on the back, and gold colour below, also with a row of tiny dots from head to tail, and a small mouth, but with a threatening, putty look about the gills, as if, like other good-looking individuals, it could get out of temper. Though a yard long, to judge from its portrait, it is not more than half an inch thick, and displays neither dorsal nor ventral fin. Then there is an eel with a name almost as long as itself (the aphthalmichthys macrocephalus!), of much the same proportions, also coloured dark green on the back, and of a pure golden yellow underneath, with wonderful tiny eyes. Then there are many eels. Then we come to a creature (the murænesox singaparensis) which, if I had the good fortune to hook, I should decapitate as soon as possible; for, though a magnificent eel, two feet long, with dark green back, pale green sides, brownish golden fin, and large yellow eye, yet it has a range of teeth which I should not care to test. In addition to four long and extremely sharp cutting teeth in the upper jaw, there is a row of most formidable grinders or crushing teeth, shaped somewhat like pointed acorns in their cups, running along the roof of the mouth, while the under jaw is nearly as well stocked. However, we soon afterwards come to an eel (the brachysomophis cirrocheibus) which looks still more formidable; in fact, I think if I caught *him*, I should not even go near enough to try decapitation, but should adopt the expedient put in force by a friend of mine, who, finding himself the captor of an ill-looking eel, drew his knife and resolutely cut away, not only the fish, but the tackle also. This redoubtable animal is about four feet long. The mouth is large enough to give a serious bite, and is furnished with a row of powerful teeth; the small oval deep blue eye is set almost at the fore end of the head. The prevailing colour of the throat and body is orange, passing in places into a purplish red, and marbled with purple here and there almost of a black hue. All this, with the swollen look of the throat, gives it very much the appearance of a serpent, equally beautiful and repulsive. And now we pass more eels, some marvellously long and beautifully coloured, until we are arrested by a most snaky-looking thing, not so large as the great fish just described, but still more like a serpent; the dorsal fin rises like a hood from its head, the eye is small and round; it is marbled all over with yellowish green, dirty Indian red and black. Altogether, it is decidedly unpleasant to look at, and we gladly hurry on to gaze at an eel so beautiful that it must be quite delightful to be eaten by it, and any worm or shrimp so honoured ought to blush at his own unworthiness of such a preference. Some two feet long, of the most graceful form conceivable, it at once catches the

eye. The snout is of a reddish gold colour, the head purplish, the iris purple and light blue. At the neck is a bright bar like gold, more than half an inch wide, running vertically; and then for an inch to the beautifully shaped pectoral fin, the throat is deep purple; directly after this comes a bar of golden yellow. From this point the upper part of the side is of a rose colour, shading off above almost into black, and passing below into a faint greenish hue, and then into a decided yellow. The dorsal fin is a narrow streak of bright canary yellow at the top; beneath this begins quite abruptly a blackish purple hue, which passes into a greenish straw colour. The lofty crested fish snake (ophichthys altipinnis) is a splendid animal, but also not a very pleasant one to catch. It is a fine powerful eel, more than three feet long, with a large mouth and pointed head. The colour above is olive green; beneath and in front, it is Indian red passing into a reddish hue behind; all along underneath it is speckled; the colour of the back is divided from that of the belly by a very sharp line of demarcation. The pectoral fin is of a beautiful purple, but the dorsal fin is calculated to give it a thorough snaky look, for not only is it marbled all over with Indian red, greenish yellow and brown, but it rises up almost immediately behind the head so as to look like a hood. The eye is very fine, having one ring of blue, another of purple, and a third of bright yellow. The teeth, however, are not nearly so formidable as in some others.

Time and space fail fast, and we must push on past other eels till we stop at the serpent fish Bonaparte (ophichthys Bonapartei). It is a finely-proportioned eel, from two feet to two feet and a half long, with a pointed head most beautifully marbled with the palest brown and brown almost of a purple hue, parted from each other by sharp trenchant lines of colouring, and running all over the head in islets and creeks. From the head backwards it is barred with purple brown, and a mixture of Indian red and golden green, the colours being very distinct. The bars themselves are shaped thus: the dark ones are wide below, then narrow inwards, and then swell out gradually to become round at the top, which reaches half way up the dorsal fin. Being nearly as wide as they are deep, they resemble in shape the old-fashioned coarse jars or pipkins turned upside down. The dorsal fin rises almost from the head; it is of a golden straw colour, and, besides being marked here and there with the bars, is dotted with brown purple spots. Then comè more eels still. Tapeworm eels, not a third of an inch deep, and nearly, if not quite, half a yard long; green and gold eels, wonderfully slender and elegant in their figures, with diamond-shaped tails; eels coloured gold, shaded with Indian red and brown; others, coloured dark Indian red, brown, and white, with pectoral fins the hue of brickdust; many of them fine large fish, strong enough to test the temper of the best bamboo rod, or try the toughness of the best gut and Kendal hook ever made. Eels, again, with scarcely a vestige of fin, and that only at the tail; some, coloured as if they had been dipped into a paste of red brick and mashed olives; eels that would take pages and pages to describe.

And now comes the most beautiful eel in the world. It is not merely the shape of the creature (the leiuranus colubrinus), though that is faultless; "Oh no, it is something more exquisite still"—the colouring. This superb eel is about half a yard long, and only about half an inch deep, with a most elegant narrow dorsal fin, like a straw green silk cord lying along its back. From the tip of its snout to the tip of its tail, it is barred with yellowish nankeen and rich golden brown, both colours of the greatest delicacy and purity. The brown bars are shaped somewhat like a Minié bullet, with the narrow end of the cone turned downwards. The head, eye, and mouth, are extremely small and elegant.

The last eels to be here mentioned are the echidnæ, nasty disgusting things, with a fleshy newt-like look, to which the thick dorsal fin, continued from the head over the tail, and the thick speckling with a dirty-meat like colour, which almost entirely covers some of them, in no slight degree contribute. The xanthospilos is one of the most remarkable. Though not really much stouter than the English eel, it looks much heavier, has a fleshy appearance, and is spotted in a most singular manner for a fish: the ground in the body being dark brown throughout, and lighter brown in the fin; all over the surface are sown bright golden spots, mostly round or oval in shape, and not bigger than a split pea; a few, however, are somewhat lengthened out. There are four parallel rows of spots on each side. In all these echidnæ the eye is remarkably small: for instance, in this fish it is not more than the tenth of that of a conger on the same page, an animal only a little longer. The variegated echidna is nearly two feet long, and slender, being not much more than an inch thick at the thickest part. This fish is streaked all the way along, fin and all, with bright golden bars upon a dark brown ground. It is, however, difficult to say that these shades of colour can be called bars, or, indeed, to say what they can be called; for though tolerably uniform in respect to breadth, the golden stripes are mottled with many little irregular islets of brown, that they look like colour which has flowed upon glass: while each bar of brown colour bears from one to several spots of bright yellow, generally clustered into groups. The many-zoned echidna (echidna polyzona) is perhaps the cleanest built of these strange fish, but even it has a little of the newt-like look; something of the cut you would expect to see in the inmate of some cool dark grot, or an old Asian tank not kept over sweet. But it is very pretty in its way. Octavia might have put it in her bosom in lieu of a lizard, and Cleopatra might have paired it with the "pretty worm of Nilus." It is not above six inches long; the head is exceedingly small, and the tail pointed; it is of a beautiful clear brown colour,

with narrow vertical stripes of bright gold at intervals of a third of an inch. These stripes are nearly straight, though some few of them bend a little, and two of them, about an inch and a half from the head, are united below by a cross-bar of the same colour.

The commander of Tilbury Fort could not see the Spanish fleet because it was not in sight, and the circumstances which influenced the visual powers of so illustrious a person may well be allowed equal potency over those of ordinary mortals. I cannot tell what our naturalist has to say about eels, their ways and habits, their manners and customs, their lungs and spiracles, &c., because I cannot yet see the numbers of his great work which ought to contain all this. I look across the library-table for them, and behold a blank.

DREAMING SHARP.

When people in Ireland have dreams of great significance they are said to "dream sharp," and I had a dream the other night that had much meaning in it, mixed up with a great deal of whimsicality. I thought I was present at the performance, not of a pantomime exactly, but of a sort of extravaganza equally grotesque as any pantomime I ever witnessed. It was entitled "The Metamorphoses of Mammon, with Wonderful Changes and Startling Effects," as set forth in letters of gold on a slip of white satin, for playbill, — all being magnificent in my dream, scenery, dresses, everything. I cannot remember a consecutive plot exactly, there being much of that disjointed wildness in my vision so characteristic of phantasma, but the main upshot of the piece was all about the attractions and temptations of money, and the plots of villains to obtain it. There was a quantity of allegory, as might be expected: one of the grandest scenes was the Temple of Mammon, and a leading character was the hierophant of the temple, ycleped Ghulthephools. The King of the Inexhaustible Gold Mines, called Rhaubalyucan, held a foremost place also. The King publishes a sort of manifesto or proclamation, setting forth how Mammon rejoices in observing his votaries acquiring money, that for this purpose there is nothing tends so much to that desirable end as making offerings of gold in *his* temple. Mammon, moreover, delighted with this act of his worshippers, and the mere sight of the gold laid on his altar, *for a short time*, not only is undesirous of holding this money permanently, but permits his votaries to withdraw their lodgments in his temple whenever they like, according to their necessities or their pleasure. To encourage them, however, in the practice of votive investments of a more enduring kind, Mammon promises an increase of wealth to such as leave their treasure longer in his care, proportionably with the various value of the deposits, and this act of grace on his part is called a "*per centum*," while, from time to time, Ghulthephools cries out in an imposing tone, "*Bonus! Bonus!*" being given to Latin phrases, though his Latin would not bear a strict translation in plain English, for there was very little *good* in his *bonus*, as will be seen in the sequel.

But this politic move on the part of Rhaubalyucan, increases, as might be supposed, the votive tendencies of his subjects, and a special scene of great bustle occurs in the rush of crowds to the temple, who pass immense quantities of treasure over the altars of the "Fane of the Golden God" into the hands of his inferior ministers, for deposition in the "Treasure Vault of the Temple," a scene of great magnificence: quite a triumph of the unrivalled pencil of Mr. H. Cleverly.

Amongst the ministers of the temple are "the Lords Directors," rather queer characters too. One might expect magnificent dresses upon the persons of Lords Directors: but no; they wore white aprons and white nightcaps—in fact, appeared nothing more nor less than *cooks*. They, wishing to pleasure Rhaubalyucan by the gratification of his inordinate appetite, cook away for him gaily, but after a manner unknown to Ude, Soyer, or Francatelli; and so far from hinting that he is ravenous, they suggest that his appetite wants stimulating, and recommend him to seek a bracing air, and as this can best be obtained by yachting, they procure for him a vessel appropriately called a "craft," somewhat strained in her timbers, for she had been engaged before in the Levant trade, and was distinguished among the knowing ones by the name of "The Three Decks and no Bottom." That title they change, however, to the more promising one of "The Floating Capital," but all they can do will not get her rated at Lloyd's as class A, No. 1. Nevertheless, she is considered quite fit for a start except as regards her rigging, so a gang of riggers is engaged, and to work they go with a will, pulling away like "good 'uns," and Rhaubalyucan, Ghulthephools, and the riggers, soon set sail for the Gulf of Jugglum. On the shores of this gulf there appears to be a market—a fish-market—much after the manner of the celebrated market-scene in Masaniello. There is a chorus, too, as in Masaniello, the chorus being that of the riggers, who arrive in the nick of time at the market, and deal for flat fish and gudgeons extensively. Word for word, and note for note, the famous passage in the Masaniello chorus is copied in that of the riggers:

Take heed, whisper low!

After which thunders forth the well-known joyous outbreak,

The prize we seek we'll soon ensnare,

and the scene closes with a Pas de Gréeurs, or dance of riggers, a tremendous Rigadoon, "by the whole strength of the company."

Now, while the King and his worthy ministers are cruising about, the guardianship of the treasure vault of the temple is entrusted to the King's eldest son, Prince Khofferghutter, a name not very suggestive of fitness for his office; and an-

other official of very evil tendencies enters into a plot with him to rob the treasure vault. That official's name is Ballanzjheet, apparently of mortal mould, but, in fact, one of the demons of the piece—for a good deal of devilry was interwoven through it. Ballanzjheet is celebrated for his disguises, and by this means (that is, in disguise) passes into the service of the treasure temple, while, in fact, he is only an imp of the worst description, and a favoured child of the Father of Lies, and he (that is, Ballanzjheet) and Khofferghutter make sad havoc in the treasure vault; in short, playing old gooseberry with the money is the fruit of their union.

Another of my dreamy imps was called the Demon of Distrust, at enmity with Khofferghutter and his confederate, and always dodging about hiding in sly places to watch them, and making ever and anon sharp speeches against them in most fantastical rhymes. In the course of this strange dream-drama the Spirit of Public Confidence appeared, who seemed but a simple sort of body, fond of works of fiction, which she was going about reading, much given to sweets of a deleterious and intoxicating character, made by a swindling confectioner called Suckkumbendibus, at whose shop this weak-minded spirit was a constant customer. Part of the "funny business" of this extravaganza consisted in Public Confidence having her pocket everlastingly picked by the oddest characters in which this dreamy drama abounded; and one circumgyrating sylph, in particular, with spangled wings, personated by a young lady, was very busy in cheating everybody she could. She was called "Legs," and a very nice pair she had, by-the-by, but, instead of being encased in white silk or in "fleshings," they were dressed in black.

Some mysterious doings were going on between Prince Khofferghutter and this sylph, and once, on her flying away with a lot of money, the Prince, pointing to the spangled flappers at her shoulders, elegantly exclaimed:

"I say!—my eye!
How money *does* fly!"

This witticism "brought down the house" to such a degree, that I wonder it did not waken me.

There was a queer scene, too, between Ballanzjheet and the Father of Lies. The latter asks why the former has a large bag of gold-dust in his possession. "I always melt my gold into ingots, in my fire here," says Father of Lies; and he proposes to do the same by Ballanzjheet's gold-dust, if he likes. But Ballanzjheet says he can turn his dust into a much larger amount than melting it down could produce. "How?" inquires Father of Lies. "By throwing it into people's eyes," says Ballanzjheet, "*that's* how *I* do it!"

Towards the end of the piece, Public Confidence approached the Temple of Mammon with an ample offering, and Khofferghutter, with an insinuating smile and a low bow, received it from her. They both retired at opposite sides, the Demon of Distrust peeping from behind a column where he had been hidden. This column, like all the others of the temple, was of a twisted form, such as Raffaelle introduces in the cartoon of "The Beautiful Gate," and was composed of intertwined bars of gold, silver, and copper, representing pounds, shillings, and pence, and from this hiding-place, I say, the Demon of Distrust came forward. Looking to the point where Public Confidence had retired, he put his hands to his nose, after the manner of "taking a sight," and then to his sides, and shook again with a guffaw of a laugh. Then, after clenching his fists and brandishing them in a most menacing manner after Khofferghutter, he made to the audience, in a confidential style, one of his minacious and vindictive speeches.

"Villany of villany, will Time disclose.
'I know a bank whereon the wild thyme blows,'
Sweet William says. This question *I* propose:
Who knows a BANK whereon the vile time grows,
And venture to prognosticate 'twill never *close?*
For on that bank, alas! in vile time grows
Some parasites that steal the sap that flows,
And leaves the parent 'Plant' to withering woes!
Yes, upon that bank in vile time grows
Inward corruption, gnawing, without shows,
Like the maggot in the nut, or the canker in the rose.
Within the Fane, from gaze profane, a secret drain there flows,
Sucking down the money which the public never knows.
Stealthily, the wealth away, will melt away, like snows
That fall on pavements underneath which baker's oven glows.
'Twould take a conjuror to tell how all the money goes.
Is't chasing? is it racing? for no one can suppose
That horses fine, and costly wine, and dinners, and fine clothes,
Of cash by hundred thousands, could possibly dispose.
Is't knave and ace that go the pace, or little bones whose throws
Can make or break the reckless rake—that bird of night who goes
To a fashionable aviary of pigeons and of crows?
Or is there an ambition to be 'mong the 'ayes' and 'noes'
Of a certain 'House?' to get into which always costs *quelque chose.*
Or are there mines? For pantomimes so quickly can't transpose,
As 'balances' at bankers are transmogrified by those.
Or was 'the opera' taken? that ruin of repose,
To subsidise soprani and the meritorious toes
Of high *danseuses*, of able thews and sinews, who unclose
The eyes of some old fogies thro' the opera who dose.
Or was it 'Pennsylvanian Bonds' that 'chaw'd all up?' Who knows?
But guessing is like fretting, of no use. Experience shows
Our grandmothers knew better where their trust they might repose,
For they kept their golden guineas safely hidden in their hose.
A ravelled worsted stocking is safer far for heirs
Than when a worsted banking-house unravels its affairs."

After this, there was an attempt at a grand piece of scenic illusion, but seemingly a hitch occurred in the machinery, and the audience began to hiss, and there were loud cries of "Manager! Manager!" The manager, however, did not appear, and the piece seemed to be hurried over to a termination.

An old witch hobbled in, holding up a bag, and crying, "Now for the catastrophe!" Then, opening the bag, she exclaimed, "The cat's out of the bag!" and out jumped a large cat, which changed immediately into a lovely young lady, dressed in white, and bearing a wand. She called on Prince Khofferghutter, in an appalling style, to "ap-p-e-a-r!!!" which he did, throwing himself on his knees before her. She then exclaimed, in a magnificent manner,

"Wretched youth!
I am the Spirit of Truth."

She waved her wand, and several of her attendants rushed in, some of whom carried off Khofferghutter in chains, while others pursued up and down the evil-doers of the temple, and a desperate hurry-scurry ensued. In the midst of all this shindy, the Spirit of Truth shook her wand at the temple, over whose portico, by the way, blazed forth in letters of gold,

"TEMPLE OF MAMMON,"

and at this condemnatory motion of the wand down fell the "Fane of the Golden God" with a loud crash, a cloud of dust arose from the fallen rubbish, and all that remained of the temple was the *name*, which still appeared on the cloud; but even *that* underwent a change, for the initial letter M was metamorphosed into G, so Mammon became Gammon.

OUR UNCLES.

I HAVE vowed to take our uncles down a peg, and now I will do it. I have said that they are vain, purse-proud, pretentious, blusterous old humbugs, and I hold by that. I repeat, aunt is the friend, not uncle. Mind, I speak ex cathedrâ, for I am an uncle myself, and you know the proverb: which, being interpreted for the present occasion, is—set an uncle to catch an uncle.

No, no, my fine fellows, you can't deceive me. *I* know you, with your broad-brimmed hats, and your flowered waistcoats, and your gaiters, and your malacca canes, with the tassel, and all the rest of your Brummagem avuncular paraphernalia. What is the meaning of paraphernalia? Tell me that. Goods in a wife's disposal. Just so. All the good that is in you is derived from your association with our aunts. You shine with a borrowed light. You are the moons of our family system, full and fair enough in the face sometimes; but pale and cold. Our aunts are the warm suns.

Come down from that pedestal. I am regarding you as an image now, a senseless stock and stone, which we have worshipped too long. So, I say, come down from that pedestal. Let me ask, who put you up there on that towering pinnacle, where you have no right to be? I will answer that question. The comedy writers put you up there. You were put up there as a Deus ex machinâ, a figure to be let down a wire, a mere dummy with a sham purse, and sham sovereigns in it—you being wound up to give those sham sovereigns to a sham nephew, whose distress is as much a sham as the "gold" which relieves him. If those pieces chinking in your purse were anything better than discs of tin, you would see your nephew hanged before you would give him one of them.

Holding the mirror up to nature, I can find no one at all like you reflected in it. You exist only in the imagination of the comedy writer. He brings you out from his box of figures, as occasion requires, just as he brings out the wicked lord and the virtuous peasant. What is the difference between you and the wicked lord? The wicked lord dresses in sky-blue velvet and you dress in snuff-brown. The wicked lord wears a sword, and has elegant legs; you carry a malacca cane, and make up your legs to convey the respectable idea of rupees and gout. As to the difference between you and the virtuous peasant, it is simply this: you say "Gadzooks" and he says "Dang it." Which is the full extent of profanity to which he will go in presence of the public, albeit out of his flowered waistcoat he can swear like a trooper, just as you, when you lay aside your broad-brimmed hat, your gaiters, and your malacca cane with the tassel, can be, in reality, as wicked, as cruel, and as heartless, as the lord is supposed to be. Yes; the lord is wicked because he is a lord; the peasant is virtuous because he is a peasant, and you are rich and generous because you are an uncle. It would be just as reasonable to regard a man as pious because he is a pork-butcher.

I appeal to the public. Is not this your idea of uncles? That they are all kind-hearted old fogies, whose whole mission on earth is to give their nephews and nieces sovereigns, and make them happy; that they are short and fat and choleric, gruff externally, but within, warm; that, almost as a rule, they make a great deal of money in India, and come home on purpose to die of liver complaint, and leave it all to the children of their brothers and sisters; that they condemn themselves to celibacy for this very purpose, and die happy in the consciousness that they have fulfilled that purpose. Yes; you admit it—this *is* your idea of uncles. Now, whence have you derived that idea? Is it warranted by your own experience? When you have had sufficient time to review your uncles and reckon up how many sovereigns they have given you, and what amount of happiness they have conferred upon you, I have no doubt you will be very much surprised to find that it is *not* warranted by your experience. You have had faith in an uncle of this sort; but when you come to turn him about and examine his points, you discover that he is nothing but an

idea—an idea of the comedy writer. He has been handed down to us from the earliest eras of the drama, until we find him setting a copy to all modern time in the School for Scandal. Do you believe in Sir Oliver Surface? *I* don't. Do you believe that an uncle of real life would have troubled himself about those arcades ambo, Joseph and Charles? Why should he? Joseph was a cold-hearted hypocrite; Charles was a spendthrift, and as great a hypocrite as Joseph. Don't tell me it was because he had natural affection that he wouldn't sell his uncle's picture. He knew very well all the time who the old fellow in the snuff-coloured coat was. Careless had warned him beforehand. And the old donkey, Sir Oliver, was vain enough to believe those crocodile tears genuine! I know I have tried on little dodges of this kind with my uncles, and it was no go. I have baited the hook with real genuine affection, but they wouldn't bite. You see the sovereigns which they *chinked* in their pockets were made of gold, not of tin. And in this connexion gold is more a hardener of the heart than tin.

It is true we are all familiar with these absurd uncles, who are for ever going about with a breastful of human kindness and a purseful of money; but, according to my experience and the experience of a large circle of nephews and nieces of my acquaintance, we rarely—never, I may say—meet with them, except on the stage. That jeune premier's stage uncle is giving him gold and his blessing, while his real uncle at home is selling him up for the fifty pounds he owes him.

As a matter of fact and reality, I prefer the tragedy writer's view of our uncles. In tragedy they are uncles who smother us in our sleep, who burn our eyes out with red-hot irons, who take us into dark woods and lose us, who poison our papas as they lie sleeping in their back gardens of an afternoon. This sort of uncle is much nearer the mark of real life. Instead of his being designed by nature and a beneficent fate to be a blessing to his nephews, his nephews are designed to be a curse to him. They stand in his way, or they are always wanting something of him, or they are a disgrace to him. It is only natural, therefore, that he should consider them bores, and treat them as such.

According to my experience, the uncle of real life seldom bears any resemblance to the ideal which we are all so fond of cherishing. He is neither uniformly good, as he appears in comedy, nor uniformly bad, as he is represented in tragedy. He is of all sorts, and in the majority of the aspects which he assumes he is about as indifferent and unsatisfactory a person as is to be met with on the stage of life.

Let us review some of the uncles whom we all know and have experience of every day. About that uncle who goes to India, makes a heap of money, and comes back expressly to die and leave it all to his nephews and nieces. Who knows him? Is there one person in ten thousand who ever had, or ever will have, such an uncle? Is there one in a million? I opine, not. Such a phenomenon has been seen and known, no doubt, but he is not the uncle of every day in the week; far from it. I once thought that *I* had an uncle of this delightful kind, but I was mistaken. True, I *had* an uncle—he remained in India many years, he made a large fortune, and he came home (as we all expected) with the amiable intention of dying and leaving it to his relations. But in this latter respect he neglected to fulfil his mission. After reaching London he came down to the country place where we lived, and excited us all to a pitch of delirium with a story of his immense wealth and benevolent intentions. We made a great fuss with him; we launched into enormous expenses to entertain him and make him comfortable. We gave him the very softest bed in the house to die on, we provided parchment, pounce, and sealing-wax for the will. The girls broke off their matches with substantial young farmers in the expectation of elegant earls; the boys forfeited their indentures in the assurance of commissions in the army; we snubbed and slighted our old humble friends, and quarrelled with them. In fact we conducted ourselves as if we had had the bird in the hand. But the bird was still in the bush. He flew away to London to settle his affairs, but he never came back, and we never heard of him more. It was suspected that he was murdered in London for his money, but I don't believe he had any money; my opinion is that he was a boasting, lying humbug, like Joe Grimaldi's brother, of whom I will never believe anything but that his design was to impose upon Joe, and live upon him until he should be disposed for another voyage. Did I not once know an uncle who came home to his family and excited great expectations (at the same time securing for himself great attention and hospitality) by reason of a large and heavy box, which he said he had brought direct from the Australian diggings? This uncle remained with his family for six months, living on the fat of the land, and hinting mysteriously every now and then that the box would be opened some day soon. But one morning he disappeared suddenly, and when the box was opened by his expectant nephews and nieces it was found to contain paving-stones!

That rich uncle from India was the ruin of us. We had got into debt on our expectations; we were sued on account of calipash and calipee; we had to borrow money of the neighbours we had slighted; we had to eat humble pie and abase ourselves in the dust. I *have* known a rich uncle, and so, no doubt, have you—an uncle who lived by himself in a fine house, securely guarded by a spiked wall behind, and a dragon of a housekeeper in front. We all look up to that uncle, and have expectations of him. But, generally, that uncle looks down upon us, and disappoints those expectations. It is no easy matter to pass that dragon of a housekeeper, looking out from her tower of observation in the front parlour. She has a keen eye for nephews wanting a few pounds, or a suit of clothes, or a letter of recommendation. It is really wonderful how very often an uncle of this

class, so guarded, is "not at home." And when he is at home, and you are admitted to his benevolent presence, does he poke you in the ribs, call you a sly dog, and chuck you purses of money? Does he? But why do I ask, when I know it is much more his disposition to slap you in the face, call you a lazy dog, and turn you away from his door. If he gives you anything —which he rarely does without consulting his housekeeper—he gives it you grudgingly, telling you that this is the last time, and you mustn't apply to him any more. And how does he ask about his dear brother, your papa? Does he not ask after him as if he were a low, unfortunate person, who had no business to be his brother? And when you tell him that your papa has had another misfortune, he says, "Humph!" which is a word which is never used by any one but curmudgeons and grumpy uncles. Is it in your recollection that, when you visit a rich uncle of this kind, you are always sharply told to wipe your feet, and not to make a mess with the crumbs of the dry stale biscuit they gave you for refreshment? How often does this uncle make a fool of himself (and of you) by marrying that dragon of a housekeeper, or leaving all his money for the promotion of something—which is anything but the welfare of his own flesh and blood?

There is another variety of rich uncle, who is a good deal more pleasant in a certain way. He is rather a jolly old party, but he is a humbug, for all that. He slips a sovereign into your hand just to enjoy your surprise and delight; he takes you out for the day, because you are a handsome lad, perhaps, and people may take you for his son. Notice him prick up his ears when some one says, "Hasn't that old gentleman got a fine boy!" How often does he introduce you to his friends, and say, "My nephew, sir," quite proud to let people know that he has members of his family better looking than himself. In the innocence of your young heart, you think it very kind of uncle to take you to the theatre, and sit out, for your sake, some play that he must have seen scores of times. You don't know then, but you come to understand afterwards, that it was a much greater gratification to him to watch your wonder and astonishment and to listen to your hearty boyish remarks, than it was to you to gaze at the brilliant scenes, and listen to the fine talk of the actors. It is a new sensation to the selfish old hunks! When he gives you that sovereign and pays for the brougham and the box, he has had his pleasure cheap.

But, if I am not mistaken, we are all much more familiar with uncles who are not rich, who, indeed, are anything but rich. I have known uncles come back from India and lands of gold, in rags and tatters—with very generous dispositions, no doubt, but without the means of showing them. I have known nephews and nieces club together to send those uncles back again to India and lands of gold, not with the faintest hope that any of the gold would ever stick to them, but simply to get them out of the way. I knew such an uncle once, who came back from El Dorado and declared that he would hang himself if his married niece did not give him a new pea-jacket with brass buttons. The favour which this uncle did to his relations was to get drunk and consort in an unseemly manner with the servant maids.

And who has not known, to his cost, that uncle of a free and liberal disposition—as regards himself—who never settles down to anything, who lives gaily at the expense of the family, and, in bearing the name of the family constantly drags the name through the dirt and brings it to disgrace? This is an irrepressible sort of uncle, whom there is no disposing of. His brothers and sisters, and nephews and nieces, are people of credit and renown in the world, and they don't like to send their scapegrace uncle out of their own immediate sphere, where they are well known, into another sphere where they are not so well known. And so they take the viper to their bosoms, and bear with him, as best they may, while he bites them all over. I declare, upon my honour, that this is the most generous uncle I have ever met with. Yes, I have known *him* poke his nephews in the ribs, and call them sly dogs, and give them money. But it was not his own money!

I don't like to say anything about the poor, unfortunate, half-starved, broken-down uncle, but he is, if I may be allowed the expression, a frequent fact, nevertheless. He is an uncle whose existence is sometimes kept a profound secret, who is warned never to come to the house when there is company, and who, when he does arrive, on a borrowing expedition, at an inopportune moment, is hid away out of sight in the housekeeper's room, or the kitchen. I am afraid I can remember an uncle of this class, who, for many years, was only known to his nephews and nieces as "the man." He was a man, but I fear he was not a brother.

These are very unpretending uncles, who would never take the liberty to poke their nephews in the ribs, and never have any money about them to chuck at anybody. I pity them. But as for those blusterous, purse-proud patronising uncles, who get the credit for unlimited human kindness and generosity, they are arrant old humbugs and pretenders. I vowed that I would take them down a peg, and now I flatter myself I have done it.

AMATEUR FINANCE.

IN THREE PARTS. PART III.

Amongst the directors of "The House and Land Finance and Credit Company (Limited)," there was hardly a single individual who did not attempt to serve two masters. We had on the Board soldiers, sailors, barristers, retired Indian judges, country gentlemen, solicitors, and pure idlers—individuals whose whole day was taken up in finding out the best way of killing time—but we had very few merchants, and no bankers, or men whose business it had been to deal in financial undertakings. But notwith-

standing this, we all thought ourselves fully competent to negotiate or discuss any undertaking, no matter how large, or no matter how intricate were the various ramifications which had to be considered ere we decided the question.

After we had been some little time at work, and our credit was pretty well established, one of the small South American republics applied to us for a loan of two millions sterling. That is to say, the government in question did not ask or expect us to put our hands in our pockets and make over this amount to them; nor yet was it deemed likely that we should sign a cheque on our bankers for two millions, and send it to them in a registered letter. What they wanted was that we should "place the loan" on the London and foreign markets for them, and this we undertook to do on certain conditions. These were, first, that our commission should be two per cent on the whole amount if we succeeded and "floated" the undertaking, and one per cent if we failed in so doing. Thus, whether the loan came off or not, we were certain of a commission of at least twenty thousand pounds, or if the loan was taken up, of double that amount. In the second place, the loan, if it succeeded, was to be paid half in cash, and half in acceptances of our company, which were to be renewed every six months. And lastly, the customs revenues of the republic were to be made over to us as security, and we were to put men of our own into office as receivers of customs, until the loan was paid off. The loan was to be issued to the public at seventy-five, or, in other words, for every hundred pounds worth of scrip in this loan, the subscribers would only have to pay seventy-five pounds, and every half year a certain number of these bonds—which were to be decided by lottery—were to be redeemed at par. Thus, let us say that Mr. Jones subscribes for one thousand pounds in this loan; he will only have to pay seventy-five per cent for the sum, or seven hundred and fifty pounds for one thousand pounds' worth of bonds, and he would receive interest at the rate of six per cent upon the thousand, not upon the seven hundred and fifty pounds. Moreover, let us suppose that at the first or second drawing of lots to decide what bonds of the scrip is to be redeemed, he was fortunate enough to have one, two, or more of his numbers turn up, he would then receive one hundred pounds for each seventy-five pounds he had laid out. The mere chance of being fortunate enough to secure such a prize, was of itself quite enough to attract plenty of subscribers. Our company showed its complete confidence in the undertaking by subscribing largely to the loan on its own account. But as the directors knew that all the shares for the company could be paid for in our own acceptances, there was but little of our capital which could be risked, no matter how much of the loan we—acting as a corporation—should take for ourselves.

The loan floated, there was no possible doubt about it. At the very favourable terms which we had offered it to the public, the two millions had been subscribed for at once. Of this gross total some three hundred thousand pounds belonged to our company; and although we paid for them in renewable bills of our own, no sooner was the scrip issued than we made use of it to raise more money as we wanted it. Thus our bills really often procured for us exactly double the value of the sum they represented upon paper. If we wanted funds, we often placed as security in one of the joint-stock banks the bonds, or coupons, we held of the loan, the bank manager who advanced the money little thinking that the scrip he was taking as security was based upon no better foundation than bills which bore our own signature and no other. In short, the signature and seal of the company was the foundation of more transactions than most people dreamt of. We were always able to purchase any amount of shares upon our own acceptances at three or six months, and these shares could be always quickly turned into cash when we required it. In fact, it was a system of founding credit, or getting credit, upon our own bills or notes of hand, and real security beyond our own signatures we had none whatever, although the fact was never fully understood by the public. This sort of business suited us. The paid-up capital of the company was never laid out at all, but was kept at interest with our banker. The capital we worked upon was what we made by our own bills, and of this we created as much as ever we wanted. What wonder, then, if our profits were large? In measure as we required money to work with, we, so to speak, coined it, and this gave us interest at a high rate, with interest upon interest, almost as much as ever we required. Our concern did not belie its name. We were rightly called a House and Land Company, for it was on such securities that we professed chiefly to lend, and as to being a "Finance and Credit" affair, we certainly worked on credit, for the whole basis of our scheme was to make others take on credit paper bearing our signature, and pay us very highly for taking it. The loan for the South American republic we carried through, and a most profitable business it was for us in every way. The English public took up the full amount of two millions, so that there was little or nothing left to place on the French or other foreign markets. As I said before, the fact of obtaining for seventy-five pounds scrip of a recognised government for one hundred, proved a temptation which few people could withstand. Moreover, after six months' time a certain portion of the scrip would be paid off at par, and every bondholder had a chance of obtaining this great piece of good fortune. Then, again, the payments of each shareholder had not to be made at once, and what will nine men out of ten not do on credit when they can obtain it? When an individual applied for shares in the loan, he had to deposit five pounds, a similar sum when the shares were allotted to him, and as much more a month later. After this, he had to pay

fifteen pounds every two months, until he had paid off the whole seventy-five pounds, so that he had about nine months in which to turn himself round and get the money.

When the transaction with the South American government was so far finished that the loan had been taken up, our account with them stood somewhat as follows: We held security, more or less good, over the customs dues of the country for two millions sterling, on which sum they had to pay us two per cent commission, and six per cent interest. For this they received one million five hundred thousand pounds, the payment to be spread over a year, and to be made two-thirds in cash and one-third in our acceptances, which of course we could renew as we thought fit. Thus we really, for our own bills, not cash, of seventy-five pounds, obtained scrip worth one hundred pounds, and charged interest at the rate of six per cent upon the hundred pounds. The commission was to be deducted from the first payment of the loan, and had to be paid in hard coin. The securities which the South American government gave us we made available to raise money upon when we wanted it, and thus, as I have before pointed out, we made our own signature—that is to say, the bills we gave—good for obtaining, as it were, double the amount which they represented.

But whilst working out our scheme in foreign lands, we did not neglect the harvest at home. Few people who have not been behind the scenes can be aware what immense interest can be obtained in London—in the City, from business men who are reported to be in good and even excellent circumstances—if the thing is managed quietly, and no one knows that the advance has been made. In every bank, every bill-discounter's office, every finance company's establishment, there are small, private, Chubb-locked ledgers, which, if laid open to the world, would cause a far greater sensation east of Temple-bar than if all the "seals of confession" throughout Europe were broken. It is not only the needy West-end swell, or the broken-down Guardsman, or the man who has made a bad book at Goodwood, that must have money, and will pay any price for it, provided the transaction is "kept dark." I have known a firm whose signature in any commercial town in Europe would have been good for half a million and more, so hard up, that if they had not been accommodated with two or three hundred thousand pounds, they must, as the Americans say, have "cracked up." In such cases, men don't go to their bankers; on the contrary, they always endeavour to keep up a good show with that individual, and for this reason never allow their balance with him to run lower than a certain fixed amount. Customers like these we dealt largely with, and of course made them pay highly for the accommodation we gave them. I remember an instance of this kind. A bill-broker came to me as managing director of the "House and Land" one morning, and asked whether we would accept his drafts on our company for a hundred and fifty thousand pounds, provided we came to terms respecting the interest and commission which was to be paid. I, of course, answered his question, Scotch fashion, by asking another, which was, what securities he had to offer us. He named certain bonds, shares, debentures, and such-like, all of which were quite third or fourth class securities. These I declined, feeling certain that there must be something behind which I could not yet see, and being, at the same time, somewhat surprised that so old a hand in obtaining loans, discounts, and advances, should propose such very indifferent security. Presently, as if struck with a sudden thought, he exclaimed, "Suppose I was to bring you a letter of guarantee from Messrs. Blank and Blank," naming a very large and first-class discounting firm in the City, "would you let me have the money?" I at once replied that I would, and in twenty minutes he returned with the letter from the firm he had named, in which they undertook to repay us the loan, if it was not liquidated by the borrower on such a date, or to pay off any portion of the loan which was unpaid at that period. The security was undoubted, and, after some little bargaining about the commission and interest, the transaction was concluded, although I was still sadly puzzled to understand how it was that the broker had obtained the guarantee of Messrs. Blank and Blank, or what he could want with so large a sum of money. In due time the loan was repaid, but it was not until some months later that I found out, by mere chance, the outs and ins of the transaction.

The broker some months later suspended payment, and as he owed our company a few hundred pounds, I was appointed one of the committee to investigate his affairs. His books were not very voluminous, and were exceedingly well kept, all in his own handwriting. Amongst other matters, I found that he had no less than three separate accounts open with the great discount house of Blank and Blank. One of these was a discount account, in which it appeared that he had, from time to time, in the regular way of business, discounted bills of customers with the firm. This was of course perfectly intelligible, and needed no explanation whatever. The second, a loan account, was also plain. The broker had from time to time borrowed money from the great discounting house, and had repaid such advances. But the third account, headed Guarantee Account with Messrs. Blank and Blank, I could make nothing of. From it the broker appeared to be a creditor of Messrs. Blank and Blank, and nothing was shown why or wherefore these sums due to him, or paid to him, had been earned. We could not make the books balance by taking in this account. The name of our company, being put down as a creditor of Messrs. Blank and Blank, made me still more anxious to learn all about the transactions detailed in the books, and I questioned the broker concerning it. At first he declined altogether to answer me, but, upon being pressed, and upon my threatening to have the estate thrown into bankruptcy, when he would be obliged to answer the commissioner of the court,

he gave me the information I required. It would appear that Messrs. Blank and Blank, although passing for men of almost unbounded wealth, were often very hard pressed for money. They did not like to make their wants known to any one, as, to do so, they would at once and for ever ruin their credit. What they did, therefore, was to employ as middleman my friend the broker, who borrowed the money as if for himself; but gave the security of those for whom he really obtained the loan. I found that the same little game had been carried on with almost every bank and finance company in London, and that whilst passing for a firm that could command any sum it liked, they were, in point of fact, obliged day by day to feed their till with the money of others, borrowed in the name of a third party.

But there were many who came to us direct, and who, rather than let it be known that they were in need of a few thousands, would have pawned themselves, and sold their families into slavery. Many of these were in our books; although the full nature of the transactions were known only to myself. I remember the head of one of the most wealthy mercantile firms coming to me one forenoon, and offering to deposit with me the title-deeds of his estate, which was worth some fifty or sixty thousand pounds, and also to give me a private bill of sale over his furniture, plate, pictures, carriages and horses—worth at least ten thousand pounds more—if I could let him have twenty thousand pounds that day, and until the next mail from India arrived. There being no danger whatever in the transaction, I agreed to let him have the money—in bills drawn by a third party, a man of straw, and accepted by us—at once. The advance was only wanted for about twenty days, yet I charged him two per cent commission, and at the rate of five per cent per annum. The loan was worth any sum that could be named to him. Had he not obtained it, the bills of his firm would have been returned that evening, and the house—of old standing and great respectability—have been in the Gazette next day. As it was, he was able to tide over the difficulty. By the next mail from Bombay the expected remittances came, he repaid the loan, and no one was a bit the wiser of the touch-and-go danger he had escaped.

But why, it will be asked, should not this party have applied to his banker for an advance? Would not that person have been the most natural person to go to when in difficulty? To this I reply, that, in these days of joint-stock banking, no merchant who is at all on shaky ground likes to apply to the manager of a bank for an advance. In the commercial world, credit is everything. If the manager of a bank at which you keep your account knows you to be in difficulties, he is, in a measure, obliged to inform Messrs. Smith, Jones, Robinson, and Brown, who are his directors and masters. When your credit has been talked of in the bank parlour, you are little better than a dead man. Besides, do you suppose that Smith will not tell the story—in confidence, of course—to his friend Wilson, as they go home together on the knife-board of the Clapham, omnibus? Or, when Jones goes this afternoon to the board meeting of the Grand Junction of Mexico Railway Company, of which he is a director, will he not mention what he heard to-day at the Resistance Bank? Of course he will; and your name will be "up," be talked about; your bills will not be discounted readily, if at all; and, in a word, your credit be shaken, which means gone. But why not go to a private banker? It is not given unto everybody to have private bankers, and they, too, are often as difficult to deal with as the manager of a joint-stock concern. In former days it was different. Any man who could show his private banker that he could pay twenty shillings in the pound, was certain to be helped to the very utmost of the security he could offer, and very often beyond it. It is still so with West-end and country bankers, when noblemen, country gentlemen, or others who have dealt long with them, and have real security to offer, are in temporary troubles. There are very few whose names are in the Peerage, the Baronetage, or Burke's Landed Gentry, but what have once or oftener in their lives gone into Coutts's, Drummond's, or Ransome's with an anxious careworn face, and come out in a quarter of an hour looking quite jolly. The best of men—the best in a pecuniary as well as in a moral sense—may, and will, want money until the end of time, and if they behave honestly with those who lend it them, will be able to borrow again and again. But in the present day merchants don't much care to keep their accounts with private bankers. The latter is to the trader what a father confessor is to a Roman Catholic, only that the latter is a good deal more indulgent than the former. The banker knows all that the merchant does, and in these days of great commerce and great overtrading, most men in a large way of business divide their accounts, so that no one bank need know all the risks they run in trade. There are now few firms that don't patronise more than one bank. If a house deals exclusively with a private bank, you may take it for granted that it does not put its hand out further than it can draw back, and the head of the firm is a steady-going, well-to-do individual, who seldom wants to discount, and who sleeps easy at night.

Finance companies are upon a different footing. They are to commerce what the Jew money-lending, West-end-living attorney is to the Household Brigade. They charge high, run greater risks, make greater profits, and keep transactions they enter into much quieter than the banks, either private or joint-stock. This is one reason why they flourish so greatly. The managing director of a finance and credit company is everything, and does not even tell his colleagues who are the parties that have borrowed from their purse. So long as the securities he holds are good, and are of greater amount than the money he has lent, the other directors ask

no questions. Unless the latter have every confidence in him, they would not commit their affairs to his management, and, in point of fact, he but acts as a pawnbroker on a large scale. His chief work is to see that the article pledged is worth more than the money advanced upon it. When large advances have to be made to other companies, on which financial operations of great magnitude are entered into, the directors, as a body, control the decisions arrived at by the board. They don't run great risks, or at least they don't think they do, and so long as borrowers will take their acceptances as cash, and pay interest for the use of their signature, there can be no doubt that finance and credit companies must make large fortunes for their shareholders.

There is one, and only one, circumstance which can injure establishments like ours, and that is when discounting becomes difficult. Unfortunately, this turn in the events of the trading world took place when we were at the height of our prosperity. Money got tight, and then tighter. The first intimation we had of there being a slight cloud in the horizon, was when one of our best customers applied for a loan of some ten thousand pounds, and requested that we would make the advance in cash, as he had found it difficult to discount some of our paper. Not that our bills were in any way exceptional. A commercial crisis was at hand, and, as if by instinct, all men began to limit the business they were doing. Short-dated bills became difficult to discount; long-dated paper impossible. We had a great deal of money on deposit, for we could afford to pay a higher rate of interest than the joint-stock banks, and consequently had many more depositors. By almost imperceptible degrees these commenced to withdraw the sums they had placed with us. After a short time, this deficit in our disposable balance began to be sensibly felt, but we believed that the storm would pass by, and even that the air would be benefited by the slight commercial thunder which had made itself heard. Unfortunately, when London, which may be called the heart of the mercantile world, is affected, the whole world feels more or less the effects of the illness. In South America there was a general stagnation of business, in consequence of which, the interest upon the loan we had negotiated for the government began to be very irregularly paid, and after a time was not paid at all. This event not only affected our funds, but affected still more our credit. As a matter of course, the want of punctuality on the part of those who had raised this money in England, became very soon generally known in London, and we found it almost impossible to raise money, as we used to do formerly, upon our own acceptances. We had still a good deal of business on hand, but chiefly with foreign houses and in foreign markets. We sent out a special agent to South America, in order to try and recover at any rate a part of the money we had lent; but after a time he reported that he found it impossible to do anything, as the local authorities threw every possible obstacle in his way. We then made a complaint to the Foreign Office in London, who sent out instructions to her Majesty's representative in the republic, who made a reference to the authorities at home, who promised to do their utmost for us, but in the end did nothing. What could we do, or what could we expect? England would certainly not go to war with a republic situated thousands of miles away, for the sake of a finance company, so we had but to make the best of a bad job, and wait for better times.

In the mean while, the aspect of things was not improving at home. The joint-stock banks, having long watched our success with jealousy, now rejoiced when they found that both duty and inclination led them to wound us upon our weakest point, that of refusing to discount our paper held by third parties. At last it came to this, our acceptances were so very difficult to negotiate, that borrowers would not take them as cash, except at a very low rate of interest. Our directors thought they would contract greatly the limits of our business, and only advanced money to those who could produce the most unexceptionable security. But here, too, we were foiled. Those who had really sterling security to offer, did not bring it to us, they went to the joint-stock banks with whom they had dealt all along. We determined not to offer our bills any more to customers, but when we made any advances, to do so in cash. This worked very well for a time, but, of course, lessened immensely the amount of profits we had to show at the next general meeting, and of course made the shareholders angry. A very stormy discussion was the result. Our shareholders had all along been accustomed to very high dividends, and thought they were to last for ever. Finding their mistake, the needy—who are always the most greedy—amongst them commenced upon that most sure mode of bringing a company to grief, abusing the directors. It is curious, under such circumstances, what mere children a great number of those who hold shares in joint-stock companies become. What sane man, if he was disgusted with the way in which his house had been built, would stand at the door and tell the faults of its construction to all passers-by? But English shareholders do more than this. When annoyed with the directors of a company, they not only find fault with them, but also with everything that concerns the undertaking, and this in a manner that from its publicity cannot fail to greatly depreciate their own property, and, as a natural consequence, invariably lessen the value of the shares. When the price of these falls, they turn round and take the board to task for ruining the prospects of the undertaking; whereas, had they been content to hold their tongues, or else have washed their dirty linen at home, it is more than probable the shares in their company would have fallen little, if anything, in value. As a general rule, few shareholders who attend meetings of their company can resist the temp-

tation of seeing their own names in print. They pay, and generally pay very dearly, for their whistle, but they should not object to doing so, for it is but the natural consequence of their own acts, and for one company that is ruined by the manager or directors, a dozen are forced into the winding-up court by the more than absurd acts of their own shareholders.

Unfortunately for us, a rumour of Monsieur Montaine, as Mr. Montague called himself, having taken money from the proprietors of the estate near Bordeaux on which we had advanced money, got abroad, and the shareholders were exceedingly indignant, although they could not prove what they asserted. At the next general meeting, they asked questions which few of the directors could, and none would answer. Foiled so far, they passed resolutions, which, in undisguised English, accused the whole board of being rascals. The results of the proceedings were, that every one saw the shares of the company must fall in value, and in one week they came down from six premium to two discount. This was but the natural result of the stupid, blind, and useless rage displayed at the meeting. It became more difficult than ever for us either to float any acceptances of our own, or to get others to take them as cash. And whilst this was going on, all monetary transactions in the City became more and more difficult. Like every undertaking or individual that has prospered, we had many enemies, and these now began to run us down by every means in their power. Unfortunately, our hands were not clean enough to come into any court; we could neither appear before a jury nor before the opinion of the public, for there was very much to be said against us. Although it was worse than foolish of the shareholders to make a fuss about what could not now be remedied, I for one knew that in a general way these gentlemen had truth on their side. Perhaps no one of us who formed the board would have allowed that he had actually taken bribes, but there was little doubt that nearly every director—myself amongst the rest—had accepted presents and gifts, with which matters were made very pleasant to him. In proportion as these stories got abroad, our credit fell off, and with that we lost what little remained of our business, so much, indeed, that instead of the busy scene which was formerly witnessed at our offices, it became almost a matter of form going down there at all.

Still we had money to receive from loans formerly made, and outstanding debts ought by this time to have been coming in fast. But whenever either an individual, a firm, or a company is in difficulties, debtors seem invariably to think they need not trouble themselves to pay what they owe. In the days of prosperity, we had seldom or never to ask twice for what was due to us, but now letters from the secretary, letters from our solicitor, writs, and even judgments were required before we could get in our money. At last, it struck some shareholder that he could make a good thing of it by winding us up, and in accordance with a proceeding which has before been described in this journal,* he commenced proceedings to bring the working of our company to an end. He succeeded; we are now in the Vice-Chancellor's Court, but how long we shall remain there it is impossible to say. A call of ten pounds per share has been made on our shareholders, but not one of them has obeyed the order, and I feel certain that nothing short of coercion will induce them to do so.

ARAB THOUGHTS.

General E. Daumas, well known to fame as the historian of the Arab Horse, and still better as the acute author of Mœurs et Coutumes de l'Algérie, has nevertheless the modesty to speak of the Arab mind as a subject which is still almost unknown. Feeling the interest which the French nation has in becoming acquainted with the intellect of its subjugated colony, he is publishing, in the Revue Contemporaine, a series of Pensées Arabes. The thoughts, which are given in the picturesque disorder in which they originally cropped up, were collected, for the most part, in frequent conversations held with Abd-el-Kader during his compulsory residence in France. As the general is an accomplished Arabic scholar, it is easy to understand that he would be anxious to profit by his daily intercourse with the illustrious captive, at first at Fort Lamalgue, and afterwards at the Château de Pau, whither himself and General Lheureux were deputed to conduct him, in 1848, by order of the government. Here are some of the sayings he collected:

Fortune has only a single eye, and that is on the top of her head. So long as she does not see you, she will call you by the tenderest names; she will treat you like her favourite child, and load you with benefits. But one fine day she will take you in her arms, raise you up on high, examine you attentively, and then repulse you with disgust, exclaiming, "Be off; be off with you! You are not my son."

The sultan is a palace, of which the vizier is the gate. If you try to climb in at the window, you run a great risk of breaking your neck.

Three things in this world try the rarest patience, and make the sagest lose his reason; the compulsion to quit one's native spot, the loss of friends, and separation from her we love.

Love begins with a look, exactly as a fire begins with a spark.

A sage, beholding a hunter who had stopped to converse with a pretty woman, called to him, "O thou, who pursuest and killest wild beasts, have a care lest that woman do not catch thee in her nets."

An Arab was asked, "Do you believe in the end of the world?"—"Yes," he answered. "Since I lost my wife, half the world has

* See How the Bank was Wound Up, page 276 of the last volume.

already disappeared; and when I die, in turn, the other half will vanish also."

Remember that princes have the caprices of children and the claws of lions.

She sent word to me, "You sleep, and we are separated." I replied, "Yes; but it is to rest my eyes after the tears they have shed."

He who greedily seeks honours and riches, may be compared to a man suffering from thirst which he tries to quench with the water of the sea. The more he drinks, the more he wants to drink, until at last he dies of drinking it.

Never despise counsels, from whatever quarter they reach you. Remember that the pearl is keenly sought for, in spite of the coarse shell which envelops it.

The vizier may be compared to a man mounted on a lion's back. People tremble as they see him pass; and he, more than any of them, is in terror of the creature he is riding.

When Allah has a mind to ruin the ant, he gives him wings. The insect, filled with joy and pride, takes his flight. A little bird passes, sees him, and snaps him up.

To kill, or to be killed, is the lot of men;
The lot of women is, to drag the lengthy folds of their garments along the ground.

An Arab woman was asked, What do you think of a young man of twenty?

He is, she said, a bouquet of jasmine.
And of a man of thirty?
That one is a ripe and well-flavoured fruit.
And of a man of forty years?
He is a father of boys and girls.
And of a man of fifty?
He may pass into the category of preachers.
And of a man of sixty years?
He is good for nothing but to cough and groan.

Her eyes are the eyes of a frightened antelope,
She breathes the pure air of the desert;
She lives entirely on laitage (milk-diet) and game,
And her complexion is darkened by the sun.
When I die, may my body be washed in her tears,
And may I be buried in her hair.

The well-born woman supports her husband in the trials of life, encourages him, and inspires his children with noble and generous sentiments.

The intelligent woman assists her husband, keeps a watch over his interests, and allows him to devote all his time to important affairs.

The pure woman obtains her husband's love, and acquires his intimate friendship. Nature leads us to prefer the person who has been loved by us before by anyone else.

Finally, the pious woman is strictly faithful to her husband, and maintains religious sentiments in her family:

Remember that an ounce of honour
Is better than a quintal of gold;
And the country where your dignity suffers,
Quit it, were its walls even built with rubies.

He who has never hunted, nor loved, nor trembled at the sound of music, nor sought after the perfume of flowers—do not say that he is a man. Say that he is an ass.

The best of wives is she who bears a son yet unborn,
Who leads another by the hand,
And whose steps are followed by a third.

I am vanquished by love; but she is so beautiful that my defeat is no humiliation.

The human heart instinctively loves everything that is beautiful; but in this world how many brilliant flowers do we find, which please our eye, and nevertheless are utterly destitute of any sweet or agreeable perfume?

By Allah, I would not espouse a widow, were her eyes the eyes of a gazelle. All her affection is for her late husband; all her thoughts are with the dead.

Do not attach yourself to a cruel man; sooner or later you will find him as pitiless for you as he is for others.

Do not speak of anything which you would not like to have repeated to-morrow.

Never remain alone with a pretty woman, even if you are obliged to occupy your time in reading the Koran.

Generosity is a tree planted in heaven by Allah, the master of the world, and its branches droop down to the earth. By them will climb to paradise he who treats well his guests, who fills the stomachs of the poor, and never keeps his hand closed.

When a young man marries, the Demon utters a fearful cry. His fellows immediately crowd round him, and inquire the subject of his grief. "Another son of Adam," he answers, "has just escaped out of my clutches."

The hand always open,
The sabre ready to start from its scabbard,
And one sole word. [Marks of nobility.]

To teach early, is to engrave on marble;
To teach late, is to write on sand.

Repentance for a day, is to start on a journey, without knowing where to find shelter for the night.

Repentance for a year, is to sow seed in your fields out of season.

Repentance for a whole lifetime, is to marry a woman without being properly edified respecting her family, her temper, and her beauty.

Somebody said to a cock, "Thou art nothing but an ingrate and a bad-hearted creature. Thou art well fed, and supplied with all the enjoyments of life; thou art vaunted, admired: and nevertheless, if we wish to caress thee, thou takest thy departure precipitately. Behold the bird of lofty lineage (thair el hoorr—the falcon); his whole life has been spent in the wilderness. And yet, if he become captive, he resigns himself immediately, quickly gets accustomed to his master, refusing to leave him, and showing his gratitude for every kindness of which he is the object."

"True," replied the cock. "But if he had seen as many of *his* fellows bled and roasted as I have seen brethren of mine on the spit, his conduct would not be different to my own."

Life is this: For a day of joy, you count a month of grief, and for a month of pleasure, you reckon a year of pain. There is no strength except in Allah.

Ordinarily, a man is better towards the close than at the commencement of his career. Why? Because then he has gained in knowledge, in experience, and in resignation. His temper is more even, he is less subject to be carried away by passion, and he has acquired a settled position in the world. But is the case the same with a woman? By no means. Her beauty passes; she bears no more children; she becomes morose, uncivil, and her temper gets sourer and sourer.

If, therefore, any one informs you that he has married a woman of a certain age, be assured that he has accepted two-thirds of the evil which the life of a woman contains.

Do not meddle with what does not concern you. Recollect that when the hounds are furiously fighting for a morsel of meat, if they see a jackal pass, they set off together in pursuit of him.

When a woman has adorned her eyes with kohol and dyed her fingers with henna, and has chewed mesteka (the gum of the lentisk), which perfumes the breath and whitens the teeth, she becomes more pleasing in the sight of Allah; for she is then more beloved of her husband.

Never marry a woman for her money; wealth may make her insolent: nor for her beauty; her beauty may fade. Marry her for her piety.

The goods of this world rarely bring happiness, and they almost always exclude us from the benefits of the next.

He who bears patiently the faults of his wife, will receive from the hands of Allah a recompense similar to that which he accorded to Job after his long sufferings.

This world and the next resemble the East and the West; you cannot draw near to the one without turning your back on the other.

The best way of getting rid of an enemy whose sentiments are elevated, is to pardon him: you so make him your slave.

There was inscribed on the principal gate of one of the cities of antiquity: To obtain admission into a sultan's palace, the three following conditions must be united: Wisdom, Riches, and Resignation.

Lower down was written: It is not true; if a man possessed only one of these qualities, he would never cross the threshold of a palace.

Destiny has a hand furnished with five iron fingers. When she chooses to submit a man to her will, she claps two fingers on his eyes, thrusts two fingers into his ears, and placing the fifth on his mouth, says, "Hold your tongue."

Death is a gate through which all must pass. But it is not, as is believed, the gate of the Unknown.

Have you done good?—it leads to paradise.

Have you done evil?—it conducts you to hell.

THE SIGN OF FIVE CENTURIES.

I HAVE been looking over one of the oldest houses in London—a house with a story attached to it—a house with a place in English literature only second to that famous timber domicile in Henley-street, Stratford-upon-Avon, where Shakespeare first drew breath. The house of which I speak is an inn, and it has been an inn for five hundred years, or more. It is situated about a stone-cast from one of the greatest centres of essentially modern London life to be found in all this vast metropolis; yet there it lies, dim, ancient, dusty, dreamy—wonderful even, if one begins to think of all that has come and gone since first it hid itself away in the venerable seclusion of its courtyard. From the great network of railways having their termini at the top of Tooley-street it is not ten minutes' walk to this quaint old house. You pass at one step from the nineteenth century into the fourteenth. Now, you are in all the roar of omnibuses, and cabs, and vans, with trains departing and arriving every minute, a hideous iron viaduct spanning the road, and telegraphic cables vibrating in mid-air; and now, you are in a shady nook, as quiet as a monastery, and as reverend (if not more so), where you ascend by external staircases and proceed by external galleries into the oddest of little rooms, which are as the very coffins of dead and buried times. Supposing you to have come from the Middlesex shore over London Bridge, your approach to this ancient hostelry has been in itself a curious pilgrimage. To the left are the railway termini already spoken of; across the road extends the new line to Charing-cross, striking sheer down close to the beautiful old church of St. Mary Overies, where poet Gower lies buried under a costly tomb, and Fletcher and Massinger occupy a single grave in the churchyard; to the right is the said church, lying sullenly apart at the bottom of a little valley caused by the artificial approaches to the bridge, as if indignant at its modern associates; a little way off, towards the Southwark Bridge-road, once stood the Globe Theatre, famous for the original production of certain plays, of which the world has heard somewhat ever since; and straight ahead stretches the old High-street of Southwark, not yet greatly modernised for all its traffic, and cherishing at its heart the ancient inn which has brought me all this way to see it and do it honour.

High-street, Southwark, is a land of old inns, as any one may perceive by looking up the quiet court-yards which open inwards from the main thoroughfare, and which you reach by passing under archways. Being the high road to some of the southern and eastern counties of England, the street has existed for centuries as one of the

great arteries of London. The Romans knew of it, and perhaps made it; or perhaps even the Britons, in the pre-Roman times, had already marked out a track to the southern coast through the marshy soil which in those days here spread itself about the uncertain confines of the river. In the middle ages, it was often thronged by pilgrims to the shrine of Thomas à Becket, and hence arose the number of inns by which the way is lined; for the pilgrims were commonly very jolly fellows, and did not consider it necessary to mortify themselves on the road. To this day, the White Hart, the George, the King's Head, and the Talbot—the last the most famous of all, under its more ancient and correct name of the Tabard—remain almost untouched, to remind us of the times when people travelled at the rate of only a few miles a day, and were obliged, even in the course of a short journey, to put up for the night at hostelries large enough to accommodate a small army with bed and board. At the White Hart, Shakespeare introduces Jack Cade, and it was here that Mr. Pickwick first made the acquaintance of Mr. Samuel Weller: the house until the last few weeks remained exactly as it was on the latter occasion, and as it manifestly had been for some centuries; but, as I write, it is being pulled down. Older than the White Hart, or any of the others, however, is the Tabard, and round its walls and on its roof will glimmer, as long as they shall last, the very dawn-light of English poetry.

"In Southwark," writes Stow, as far back as 1598, "be many fair inns for receipt of travellers; amongst the which the most ancient is the Tabard, so called of the sign, which as we now term it is of a jacket or sleeveless coat, whole before, open on both sides, with a square collar, winged at the shoulders: a stately garment of old time, commonly worn of noblemen and others, both at home and abroad in the wars; but then (to wit, in the wars) their arms embroidered, or otherwise depict upon them, that every man by his coat of arms might be known from others. But now these tabards are only worn by the heralds, and be called their coats of arms in service." It was from this house, towards the close of the fourteenth century, that nine-and-twenty pilgrims set forth on that journey which gave rise to the Canterbury Tales of Geoffrey Chaucer. At this distance of time we are little concerned with the speculation whether or not any such pious company ever really started from the Tabard under the exact circumstances described by our great old poet. That pilgrimages to the shrine of St. Thomas à Becket were frequent at that period, we know as a matter of history; and that they started from hostelries in the neighbourhood, at which they had previously mustered, is so probable as to be almost certain. Chaucer, though inclined to liberal views in religion, to the extent even of being a Wicliffite, was doubtless well enough disposed to join in the religious ceremonies of his age, if only for the sake of observing character; and it is therefore not at all unlikely that he actually formed one of a band of pilgrims who baited at the Tabard the night before their journey to the Kentish city. Again, it is probable enough that at least some of his characters are life-portraits; they certainly have all the effect of literal truth. But, even if they are pure inventions, they have been clad by the genius of the poet with that mysterious vitality which is more enduring than the mere life of flesh and blood. What men and women of the old days of Edward the Third and Richard the Second—apart from such as have become famous, historically or otherwise—possess a tithe of the reality of those jovial pilgrims who told tales of mirth and sadness, of life and love and death, of marvel and enchantment and saintly miracle, as they ambled by the way, and who shall continue to tell them in the free and facile verse of Chaucer as long as this English tongue is spoken on English ground, or in any region peopled by our race? The Knight who had fought in many strange lands, Christian and Heathen, and yet was "of his port as meek as is a maid;" the Squire, his son, "a lover and a lusty bachelor," singing and fluting all day, accomplished in all feats of chivalry, and embroidered in his attire as a mead with fresh white and red flowers; the Yeoman, with his nut-head and brown visage, and his "sheaf of peacock arrows bright and keen," borne thriftily under his belt; the Prioress, who was simple and coy of her smiling, and yet such a sweet human soul, so all-compact of "conscience and tender heart," that we love her like a friend; the Monk, who evidently thought more of horse-flesh than of devotion, and rode with a bridle jingling in the wind like the chapel bells; the Friar, wanton and merry, who heard confession "sweetly," and gave absolution "pleasantly," and was great at weddings, and knew the taverns in every town better than the very beggars; the Merchant, who never lost an opportunity of proclaiming his vast increase in wealth, and who managed matters so well that no one had any idea he was in debt; the Clerk of Oxenford, who cared for books above everything else in the world, and who did not speak a word beyond what was necessary; the Sergeant of the Law, "wary and wise," who knew all the precedents from the time of William the Conqueror downwards; the Franklin, who was "Epicurus's own son," and loved in the morning a sop in wine, and in whose house it "snowed of meat and drink;" the Cook, who had an intimate knowledge of "a draught of London ale," and was unrivalled in the making of blanc-mange; the Seaman, who rode clumsily, as all seamen do, and was a good fellow, though not caring much for nice points of conscience, and was brown with the hot summer, and had felt many a tempest in his beard; the Doctor of Physic, who was grounded in astronomy, and studied the Bible but little, and read Æsculapius, and Hippocrates, and Galen, and Avicenna, and would eat nothing but what was very nourishing and digestible, and that not in excess; the Wife of Bath, handsome and free, and somewhat

plain-speaking; the poor Parson, who not only taught the lore of Christ and his Apostles, but first followed it himself; the Reve, slender and choleric; the Sompnour, with a face like that of a "fire-red cherubin," and who, when drunk, would speak in nothing but Latin; the Pardoner, the Ploughman, the Miller, and all the others of that famous company;—these men and women, even though they were but the generalisations of Chaucer's genius from a wide observation of English manners, are nevertheless real living beings to us who see them at the distance of five hundred years in all the elaborate vitality of actual existence. The tradesmen who kept shop along the High-street then, much as they keep it now, have vanished utterly,—are, to our poor human perceptions, less than ghosts and shadows—are absolutely nought. But these brain-children live, and defy chance and mutability. We see them move and act; we hear them talk and jest. Their vanities and passions endure as ours shall *not* endure; their very raiment has a kind of immortality in it. Standing in the external balcony of this old inn, and looking down into the court-yard where the pilgrims assembled previous to starting (for, at least, if anywhere, it was on this spot), I find the motley company rising again in form and colour, dividing into groups, or filing in stately procession through the gateway. It is a hot midsummer day as I stand here, and the brooding noontide sultriness and silence seem to bring a weird enchantment over the old place. I forget the modern accessories by which I am surrounded. I forget the railway, and the electric telegraph, and Tooley-street, and the warehouses which the great fire ravaged so in 1861, and omnibuses, and cabs, and Pickford's vans. I am stranded in a little nook of ancient times, and the very dust about me is the dust of buried days.

The oldest part of the inn lies back from the road, and is reached by passing under a house. You then find yourself in a court-yard, with the existing tavern to the right—itself far from a new building, yet much more modern than the rest, and constructed, not of timber, but of brick. Immediately in front, as you enter from the High-street, and also to the left—thus making an angle, and occupying two sides of the court-yard—is the antique, timber-built hostelry, with wooden galleries, external staircase, and high sloping roof, which, there seems some reason to believe, is partially the same edifice as that which Chaucer must have seen. I observe, indeed, that Mr. Peter Cunningham, in his excellent Handbook of London, says that "*no* part of the existing inn is of the age of Chaucer, but a good deal of the age of Elizabeth." The point, however, does not appear at all certain. Speght, writing at the same time as Stow, speaks of the house as being the one from which Chaucer and the pilgrims started, and he adds that, having become "much decayed" through the effects of time, it had then been recently "repaired" by "Master J. Preston," with the addition of many new rooms for the reception of guests. From this, then, it would seem that the house was only renovated and enlarged, not entirely rebuilt, at the time of Speght's writing. The best part of a hundred years later, however, a serious calamity befel the Tabard, and we shall have to examine whether that calamity deprived us of all traces of the original building. In 1676, a great fire broke out in Southwark about four o'clock in the morning of the 26th of May, and, according to the account given in the London Gazette of the 29th of the same month, "continued with much violence all that day and part of the night following, notwithstanding all the care of the Duke of Monmouth, the Earl of Craven, and the Lord Mayor, to quench the same by blowing up houses, and otherwise." In this conflagration, about six hundred houses were destroyed, either by the fire itself, or by being blown up. That a *portion* of the Tabard perished on the occasion, seems to be certain, because Aubrey, who lived at the time, alludes to the fact; but the older part of the building, as we now see it, can hardly have been erected as late as the end of the seventeenth century, as the style of architecture is manifestly that of a much earlier period. "Galleries like this," writes Mr. John Saunders, in his interesting paper on the Tabard in Mr. Charles Knight's London, "belong not to the time of Charles the Second;" nor, it may be added, do the rooms which open on to the gallery, nor the passages and corridors, nor the queer old attics, nor indeed any of the features of the place. The house in the High-street, under which you pass to gain the court-yard, was doubtless built after the fire in 1676; so, perhaps, was the tavern to the right of the gateway, where you may sit in a little bar-parlour, and order refreshments in a little bar; but the timber edifice at the back, and to the left hand, is unquestionably much older. The great question is as to the amount of rebuilding carried out by Master J. Preston. The fairest interpretation of Speght's words seems to be, that a portion of the Chaucerian hostelry survived the alterations and repairs; and, if so, it is almost certain that that portion remains to this day.

At any rate, the house has an hereditary connexion with the masterpiece of our first great poet, and it is certainly old, and quaint, and interesting. Ascending into the gallery, under the guidance of one of the female servants of the inn, who seems to take as lively a concern in the antiquities of the place as though she were an antiquary, I enter one by one the little, mouldering, dusky, panelled rooms, some of them still occupied as dormitories, some empty and unused, in which the very air seems heavy with a weight of centuries. There is something ghostly about the place, it is so much a thing of the past, and lingers so strangely in the full daylight of the present. The old timber, doubtless, is firm enough at the heart, for the floors are solid to the tread, and seem as if they would last a long while yet; but the surface of the great beams and panels crumbles to the touch,

coming down in a little grey and noiseless shower, like the stealthiness and mystery of death. The ironwork, as in the hinges of doors, is red and cankered with the rust of years; and damp "has written strange defeatures" on the ceilings. Creeping about the rooms and corridors in this summer noon, I fancy that here is the very corpse of a house, slowly decomposing before my eyes, rather than a living house, such as one is accustomed to dwell in. I think I should hardly like to sleep here—not for fear of seeing ghosts, but because I should be oppressed by a sense of the immense array of human lives that had been before me in these rooms, and had traced their little circles, and passed away into the dim immensity, leaving no record of their presence. What dreams have been dreamt in these sleeping chambers by those who are themselves dreams now, and dreams that are forgotten! Dreams of good and evil, of youth and age; lovers' dreams, avaricious dreams, ambitious dreams, incoherent dreams, murderous dreams, with the knife at the throat, and a sense of life-long horror; wicked and haggish dreams; and others, again, fair with the promise of goodly days, or sweet with exquisite memories of the past! What projects have been formed here by pilgrims wending to the shrine of Thomas à Becket, or travellers going about their secular business; projects of which, whether in success or failure, the cynic hand of Time has written the old old moral, that all is vanity beneath the sun! Truly, these ancient houses preach more grimly than a death's-head. Up here in the deserted garrets, crouching under the sloping roof, one might indulge the Jaques vein bravely. All garrets are melancholy places; but were there ever such forlorn garrets as these! Thick with dust, ghastly with rotting wood and crumbling iron (here is a hinge on one of the doors so primitive in shape, that it looks as if it might have been made by Tubal Cain), dim, blinking, and haggard with long solitude, they look as if they had been abandoned for centuries. A skeleton bedstead lurks in one, and a skeleton arm-chair in another—both gone to decay. If anybody comes up here alone, at night, with a swaling, sputtering candle, I think he is a bold man. Surely there are no such rooms as these, except in a ghost story; they look so "eerie," even in the sunlight, that we will descend once more to the gallery and the main suite of chambers

So, this little cupboard is "The Pilgrims' Room," where Harry Baily (landlord *temp.* Richard the Second) feasted the nine-and-twenty pilgrims? Yes, says my conductress; but then the hall originally ran along the whole length of the gallery, and has since been divided into a number of little rooms. That this was really the case is very probable. The idea first struck Mr. John Saunders, on his visit in 1841, described in the paper to which allusion has already been made; and the conjecture thus thrown out is now stated by the attendants at the inn as a positive fact. The architectural features of the rooms show signs that all was at one time open from end to end; and it is not improbable that Master J. Preston made the alteration when he was about his repairs. Over the chimney-piece in "The Pilgrims' Room" there was at one time a fragment of ancient tapestry, representing a procession; but this has now disappeared. Outside on the gallery, however, you may still see, under the penthouse roof, a picture of the pilgrims, said to have been painted by Blake, but which is now so obscured by dirt and weather that scarcely a single figure can be detected in the general haze.

And this strange old inn—this most interesting memorial of the earliest work of genius in our language—this house which, in France, or Germany, or Italy, would be regarded as almost sacred, and which, in fact, is visited by literary pilgrims from America, as well as from various parts of England—is to be pulled down! After lasting for five centuries, it is at length to give way before the devastating rush of modern change. They tell me at the inn that the lease will run out in some two years from the present time, and that then the old walls are doomed. A pile of warehouses, I understand, is to take their place. The back of the High-street, Southwark, as I have already remarked, is a cluster of old inns and inn-yards, all of them interesting, but none so interesting or so old as this Tabard or Talbot. Will the literary men and the antiquarians of England suffer such a loss without at least making an effort to avert it? There is time enough for the attempt, and time in itself is a great auxiliary. We have saved Shakespeare's house at Stratford; let us all do our best to save Chaucer's house at Southwark.

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HALF A MILLION OF MONEY.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "BARBARA'S HISTORY."

CHAPTER XLIV. THE ART OF SELLING OUT.

It was no wonder that Saxon could not be found when he was wanted, or that it was late before he returned to the house. His imprisonment lasted altogether more than an hour; and when Miss Rivière at length rose and went away, he took a long walk round in another direction, in order that he might be able to account for his absence.

He had no sooner made his appearance, however, in the drawing-room, than the Earl carried him off to Signor Colonna's study, and there left him. The Italian met him with outstretched hands; and Olimpia, who was writing busily, looked up and smiled as he came in.

"What am I to say to you, Mr. Trefalden?" exclaimed Colonna. "How shall I thank you?"

"Pray don't mention it," said Saxon, shyly.

"How can I help mentioning it? An act of such munificence"

"I should be so much obliged to you," interrupted Saxon, "if you would say nothing about it."

"You may compel me to silence, Mr. Trefalden; but every true heart in Italy will thank you."

"I hope not, because I don't deserve it. I did it to—to please Miss Colonna."

"Then I hope that you at least permitted her to thank you as you deserve to be thanked, Mr. Trefalden," said the Italian, as he glanced smilingly from the one to the other. "And now will you pardon me if I ask you a question?"

"I shall be happy to answer a thousand."

"You have given us your cheque for a very large sum," said Colonna, taking the paper from his desk, and glancing at it as he spoke. "For so large a sum that I have almost doubted whether your banker will cash it on presentation. It is unusual, at all events, for even millionnaires like yourself, Mr. Trefalden, to keep so many loose thousands at their banker's. May I ask if you have given this a thought?"

Saxon stared hard at the cheque across the table, and wondered whether Olimpia had really doubled it or not; but the slope of the desk prevented him from seeing the figures distinctly.

"I have thought of it," he replied, with a troubled look, "and — and I am really afraid"

"That your balance will be found insufficient to cover it," added Colonna, entering a brief memorandum on the margin of the cheque. "It is fortunate that I asked the question."

"I am very sorry," stammered Saxon.

"Why so? It is a matter of no importance."

"I was afraid"

"I do not know, of course, how your money is placed," said Signor Colonna, "but I should suppose you will have no difficulty in transferring to Drummond's whatever amount may be necessary."

"It's in government stock—that is, a great part of it," replied Saxon, mindful of the New Overland Route Railway and Steam-Packet Company, Limited.

"Oh, then you will only have to sell out. Nothing easier."

Nothing easier, indeed! Poor Saxon!

"You may have to go up to town, however," added Colonna. "By the way, who is your stockbroker?"

But Saxon did not even know what a stockbroker was.

"My cousin manages my money for me," said he; "I must go to him about it."

"Mr. Trefalden of Chancery-lane?"

"Yes."

Signor Colonna and his daughter exchanged glances.

"I do not see that you need trouble your cousin this time," said the Italian, after a moment's hesitation.

"Why not?"

"Because a lawyer has nothing to do with the transfer of stock. He can only employ a stockbroker for you; and why should you not employ a stockbroker for yourself? It is more simple."

"I don't think my cousin William would like it," said Saxon, hesitatingly.

"Pray pardon me, but is it well that you should defer so much to his opinion? Might it not lead him to think himself privileged to establish some sort of censorship over your actions?"

Saxon was silent. He knew that his cousin had already established that censorship, and that he had submitted to it. But he did not feel inclined to acknowledge it.

"The present," said Signor Colonna, "is a

case in point. Your cousin is no hearty friend to our cause. He never gave sixpence to Italy in his life, and he will surely regard this noble gift of yours from an adverse point of view. Why then place the matter before him? If he disapproved you would not withdraw your donation"

"Of course not!" exclaimed Saxon, hastily.

"And you would offend him if you persisted. Be advised by me, my dear Mr. Trefalden, and act for yourself."

"But I don't know how to act for myself," said Saxon.

"I will put you in the way of all that. I will introduce you to my friend, Signor Nazzari, of Austin Friars. He is an Italian Jew—a stockbroker by profession—and worthy of whatever confidence you may be disposed to place in him."

Saxon thanked him, but his mind was ill at ease, and his face betrayed it. He was sorely tempted by Signor Colonna's proposition. He shrunk from telling his cousin what he had done, and he knew that William Trefalden would be ten times more annoyed than he was by the Greatorex transaction; but, on the other hand, he abhorred deceit and double-dealing.

"But won't it seem sly to William?" he said, presently. "I won't do what's sly, you know. I'd put up with anything sooner."

Signor Colonna, who had been writing his countryman's address on a slip of paper, looked up at this and laid his pen aside.

"My dear sir," he said, "I but advise you to do as other gentlemen do in your position. No lawyer does stockbroker's work."

"That may be, and yet"

"You might as reasonably send for your lawyer if you were ill. He could but call in a physician to cure you, as he would now call in a stockbroker to sell your stock."

"I wish I knew what I ought to do!" ejaculated Saxon.

The Italian glanced impatiently towards his daughter; but Olimpia went on writing, and would not look up. She knew quite well that her father wanted her to throw in the weight of her influence, but she had resolved to say nothing. The great work was hers to do, and she had done it; but she would not stoop to the less. So Colonna went back, unaided, to the charge, and argued till Saxon was, if not convinced, at least persuaded.

And then it was arranged that Saxon and Vaughan should go up to town together on the following day—the millionnaire to draw out his money, and the dragoon to dispose of it as Signor Colonna might direct.

CHAPTER XLV. WHAT HAPPENED THE EVENING BEFORE.

The morning was cold and grey, quite unlike the glowing golden mornings by which it had been preceded for the last fortnight, as Saxon Trefalden and Major Vaughan sped up to London by the fast train that left Sedgebrook station at 9.45.

They were alone in the compartment, sitting silently face to face, each busy with his own thoughts. The landscape was dull outside. A low mist shrouded the pleasant Surrey hills, the steam hung in the damp air for a quarter of a mile behind the flying train, and the plumy elms that came in places almost to the verge of the line, looked ghost-like and shadowy. It was such a day as French authors love to describe when they write of England and the English—a day when the air is heavy and the sky is grey, and Sir Smith (young, rich, handsome, but devoured with the spleen) goes out and cuts his throat on Primrose Hill.

Dreary as the day was, however, these two travellers were no less dreary. Saxon's thoughts were troubled enough, and Vaughan's were all gloom and bitterness. As he sat there, knitting his brows, gnawing the ends of his long moustache, and staring down at the mat between his feet, he was going over something that happened the evening before in Lady Castletowers' drawing-room—going over it, word for word, look for look, just as it happened—going over it for the hundredth time, and biting it into his memory deeper and sharper with every repetition.

This was what it was, and how it happened.

Dinner was over, coffee had been handed round, and Major Vaughan had made his way to a quiet corner under a lamp, where Olimpia sat reading. He remembered quite well how the light fell on her face from above, and how she looked up with a pleasant smile as he sat down beside her.

They fell into conversation. He asked first if he might be forgiven for disturbing her, and then if she had any commands for Italy. To which she replied that her only commands concerned himself; that he should fight bravely, as, indeed, she had no need to tell so daring a soldier, and come back safe when the cause was won. Whereupon, the thing that he had resolved never to say rose all at once to his lips, and he asked if there would be any hope for him when this had come to pass.

"Hope?" she repeated. "Hope of what, Major Vaughan?"

And then, in a few strong, earnest words, he told her how he loved her, and how, to win her, he would endure and dare all things; but she, looking at him with a sort of sad surprise, replied that it could never be.

He had never dreamed that it could be. He had told himself a thousand times that he was mad to love her; that he should be ten times more mad to declare his love; and yet, now that the words were spoken, he could not bring himself to believe that they had been spoken in vain.

So, with an eager trembling of the voice that he could not control, though he strove hard to do so, he asked if time would make no difference; and she answered, very gently and sadly, but very firmly—"None."

None! He remembered the very tone in which she said it—the dropping of her voice at

the close of the word—the sigh that followed it. He remembered, also, how he sat looking at her hands as they rested, lightly clasped together, on the volume in her lap—how white and slender they showed against the purple binding—and how, when all was said, he longed to take them in his own, and kiss them once at parting. Well; it was said, and done, and over now—all over!

And then he looked out into the grey mists, and thought of Italy and the stirring life before him. He had never cared much for the "cause," and he now cared for it less than ever. Olimpia's eyes had been the "cause" to him; and, like many another, he had attached himself to it for her sake alone. But that mattered little now. He needed excitement; and any cause for which there was work to be done and danger to be encountered, would have been welcome to him.

In the mean while, Saxon, sitting in the opposite corner, had his own troubles to think about. He was not at all satisfied with himself, in the first place, for the part he was playing towards his cousin. He could not divest himself of the idea that he was doing something "sly;" and that idea was intolerable to him. In the second place, he was not quite comfortable with regard to Miss Colonna. He had not begun exactly to question himself about the nature of his admiration for her, or even to speculate upon the probable results of that admiration; but he had become suddenly aware of the extent of her power, and was startled at finding to what lengths he might be carried by his desire to please her. William Trefalden had said that she was capable of asking him to take the command of a troop; but a vague consciousness of how Olimpia was capable of asking him to do a great deal more than that, had dawned by this time upon Saxon's apprehension.

And then, besides all this, he could not help thinking of his adventure in the mausoleum, and of the strange interview that he had involuntarily witnessed between Lady Castletowers and Miss Rivière. The girl's sorrowful young face haunted him. He wanted to help her; and he wanted advice as to the best way of helping her. Above all, he wanted to penetrate the mystery of her claim on Lady Castletowers. He would have given anything to have been able to talk these things over with the Earl; but that, after what he had heard, was, of course, impossible. So he pondered and puzzled, and at last made up his mind that he would consult his cousin on the subject while he was up in town.

Thus, absorbed each in his own thoughts, the two men sped on, face to face, without exchanging a syllable. They might probably have continued their journey in silence to the end, if, somewhere about half way between Sedgebrook station and Waterloo Bridge, Saxon had not chanced to look up, and find his companion's eyes fixed gloomily upon him.

"Well," said he, with a surprised laugh, "why do you look at me in that portentous way? What have I done?"

"Nothing particularly useful that I am aware of, my dear fellow," replied the dragoon. "The question is, not what you *have* done, but what you *may* do. I was wondering whether you mean to follow my example?"

"In what respect?"

"In respect of Italy, of course. Are you intending to join Garibaldi's army?"

"No—that is, I have not thought about it," replied Saxon. "Is Castletowers going?"

"I should think not. His mother would never consent to it."

"If he went, I would go," said Saxon, after a moment's pause. "There's camp-life to see, I suppose; and fighting to be done?"

"Fighting, yes; but as to the camp life, I can tell you nothing about that. I fancy the work out there will be rough enough for some time to come."

"I shouldn't mind how rough it was," said Saxon, his imagination warming rapidly to this new idea.

"How would you like to march a whole day without food, sleep on the bare ground in a soaking rain, with only a knapsack under your head, and get up at dawn to fight a battle before breakfast?" asked Vaughan.

"I should like it no better than others, I dare say," laughed the young man; "but I shouldn't mind trying it. I wish Castletowers could go. We've been planning to make a tour together by-and-by; but a Sicilian campaign would be a hundred times better."

"If he were as free as yourself, Castletowers would be off with me to-morrow morning," said Vaughan; and then his brow darkened again as he remembered how not only Saxon, whom he suspected of admiring Olimpia Colonna, but the Earl, of whose admiration he had no doubt whatever, would both remain behind, free to woo or win her, if they could, when he was far away.

It was not a pleasant reflection, and at that moment the rejected lover felt that he hated them both, cordially.

"Which route do you take?" asked Saxon, all unconscious of what was passing in his companion's mind.

"The most direct, of course—Dover, Calais, and Marseilles. I shall be in Genoa by eight or nine o'clock on Sunday evening."

"And I at Castletowers."

"How is that?" said Vaughan, sharply; "I thought you said your time was up yesterday?"

"So it was; but Castletowers has insisted that I shall prolong my visit by another week, and so I go back this evening. How we shall miss you at dinner!"

But to this civility the Major responded only by a growl.

CHAPTER XLVI. WILLIAM TREFALDEN EXPLAINS THE THEORY OF LEGAL FICTIONS.

Signor Nazzari was a tall, spare, spider-like Italian, who exercised the calling of a stock and share broker, and rented a tiny office under a dark arch in the midst of that curious web of

passages known as Austin Friars. He had been prepared for Saxon's visit by a note from Colonna, and met him in a tremor of voluble servility, punctuating his conversation with bows, and all but prostrating himself in the dust of his office. Flies were not plentiful in Signor Nazzari's web, and such a golden fly as Saxon was not meshed every day.

It was surprising what a short time the transaction took. Colonna might well say nothing was easier. First of all they went to the Bank of England, where Saxon signed his name in a great book, after which they returned to Austin Friars, and waited while Signor Nazzari went somewhere to fetch the money; and then he came back with a pocket-book full of bank-notes secured round his neck by a steel chain—and the thing was done.

Thereupon Major Vaughan solemnly tore up Saxon's cheque in the stockbroker's presence, and received the value thereof in crisp new Bank of England paper.

"And now, Trefalden," said he, "fare you well till we meet in Italy."

"I've not made up my mind yet, remember," replied Saxon, smiling.

"Make it up at once, and go with me in the morning."

"No, no; that is out of the question."

"Well, at all events, don't put it off till the fun is all over. If you come, come while there's something to be done."

"Trust me for that," replied Saxon, with a somewhat heightened colour. "I won't share the feasting if I haven't shared the fighting. Good-bye."

"Good-bye."

And with this, having traversed together the mazes of Austin Friars and emerged upon the great space in front of the Exchange, they shook hands and parted.

Saxon turned his face westward, and went down Cheapside on foot—he was going to Chancery-lane, but he was in no hurry to reach his destination. He walked slowly, paused every now and then to look in a shop-window, and took a turn round St. Paul's. He pretended to himself that he went in to glance at Nelson's monument; but he had seen Nelson's monument twice before, and he knew in his heart that he cared very little about it. At length inexorable fate brought him to his cousin's door; so he went up the dingy stairs, feeling very guilty, and hoping not to find the lawyer at home. On the first landing he met Mr. Keckwitch with his hat on. It was just one o'clock, and that respectable man was going to his dinner.

"Mr. Trefalden is engaged, sir, with a client," said the head clerk, to Saxon's immense relief.

"Oh, then you can say that I called, if you please," replied he, turning about with great alacrity.

"But I think the gentleman will be going directly, sir, if you wouldn't mind taking a seat in the office," added Mr. Keckwitch.

"I—perhaps I had better try to come by-and-by," said Saxon, reluctantly.

"As you please, sir, but I'm confident you wouldn't have to wait five minutes."

So Saxon resigned himself to circumstances, and waited.

The clerks were all gone to dinner, with the exception of Gorkin the red-headed, whom Saxon surprised in the act of balancing a tobacco-pipe upon his chin.

"Pray don't disturb yourself," laughed he, as Gorkin, overwhelmed with confusion, lifted the lid of his desk and disappeared behind it as if he had been shot. "I should like to see you do that again."

The boy emerged cautiously, till his eyes just cleared the lid, but he made no reply.

"It must be difficult," added Saxon, good naturedly trying to put him at his ease.

"It ain't so difficult as standing on your head to drink a pint of porter," said the boy, mysteriously.

"Why, no—I should suppose not. Can you do that also?"

The boy nodded.

"I can put half-a-crown in my mouth, and bring it out of my ears in small change," said he. "If I'd half-a-crown handy, I'd show you the trick."

Saxon's fingers were instantly in his waistcoat-pocket, and the half-crown would have changed owners on the spot, but for the sudden opening of William Trefalden's private door.

"Then you will write to me, if you please," said a deep voice; but the owner of the voice, who seemed to be holding the door on the other side, remained out of sight.

"You may expect to hear from me, Mr. Behrens, the day after to-morrow," replied the lawyer.

"And Lord Castletowers quite understands that the mortgage *must* be foreclosed on the tenth of next month?"

"I have informed him so."

"*Must*, Mr. Trefalden. Remember that. I can allow no grace. Twenty thousand of the money will have to go direct to the Worcestershire agent, as you know; and the odd five will be wanted for repairs, building, and so forth. It's imperative—quite imperative."

"I am fully aware of your necessity for the money, Mr. Behrens," was the reply, uttered in William Trefalden's quietest tone; "and I have duly impressed that fact upon his lordship. I have no doubt that you will be promptly paid."

"Well, I hope so, for his sake. Good morning, Mr. Trefalden."

"Good morning."

And with this Mr. Behrens came out into the office, followed by the lawyer, who almost started at the sight of his cousin.

"You here, Saxon!" he said, having seen his client to the top of the stairs. "I thought you were at Castletowers."

It would have taken a keener observer than Saxon to discover that the wish was father to Mr. Trefalden's thought; but there could be no doubt of the relationship.

"Well, so I am, in one sense," replied the young man. "I'm only in town for the day."

"And what brings you to town only for the day? Nothing wrong, I hope?"

"Oh, no—nothing at all. I—that is you . . ."

And Saxon, unpractised in the art of equivocation, floundered helplessly about in search of a reason that should be true, and yet not the truth.

"You want to consult me about something, I suppose," said the lawyer, observant of his perplexity. "Come into my room, and tell me all about it."

So they went into the private room, and William Trefalden closed the double doors.

"First of all, Saxon," said he, laying his hand impressively on the young man's shoulder, "I must ask you a question. You saw that client of mine just now, and you heard him allude to certain matters of business as he went out?"

"I did," replied Saxon; "and I was sorry"

"One moment, if you please. You heard him mention the name of Lord Castletowers?"

"Yes."

"Then I must request you, on no account, to mention that circumstance to the Earl. It is a matter in which he is not concerned, and of which there is no need to inform him."

"But it seemed to me that he owed twenty-five thousand"

William Trefalden smiled and shook his head.

"No, no," said he. "Nothing of the kind. It is a simple transfer of capital—a private transaction in which the Earl's name has been incidentally used; but only his name. He has nothing to do with it, personally—nothing whatever."

"But"

"But you heard only the end of a conversation, my dear fellow, and you misunderstood the little you did hear. You understand that this is not to be repeated?"

"Yes—I understand," replied Saxon, doubtfully.

"And I have your promise to observe my request?"

Saxon hesitated.

"I don't doubt *you*, cousin William," he said, bluntly; "though, of course, you know that without my telling you. But I don't know how to doubt my own ears, either. I heard that big, cross-looking old fellow distinctly say that Castletowers must pay him twenty-five thousand pounds by the tenth of next month. What can that mean, if not"

"Listen to me for three minutes, Saxon," interrupted Mr. Trefalden, good-humouredly. "You have heard of such things as legal fictions?"

"Yes; but I don't understand what they are."

"Well—legal fictions are legally defined as 'things that have no real essence in their own body, but are acknowledged and accepted in law for some especial purpose.'"

"I don't understand that either."

"I should be surprised if you did," replied his cousin, with a pleasant smile; "but I will try to explain it to you. In law, as in other things, my dear fellow, we are occasionally glad to adopt some sort of harmless hypothesis in order to arrive at conclusions which would otherwise cost more time and trouble than they are worth. Thus, when a legal contract is made at sea, the deed is dated from London, or Birmingham, or any inland place, in order to draw what is called the cognisance of the suit from the Courts of Admiralty to the Courts of Westminster. Again, a plaintiff who brings an action into the Court of Exchequer fictitiously alleges himself to be the Queen's debtor. He is not the Queen's debtor. He owes the Queen no more than you owe her; but he must make use of that expedient to bring himself under the jurisdiction of that particular court."

"What intolerable nonsense!" exclaimed Saxon.

"One more instance. Till within the last eight years or so, the law of ejectment was founded on a tissue of legal fictions, in which an imaginary man called John Doe lodged a complaint against another imaginary man called Richard Roe, neither of whom ever existed in any mortal form whatever. What do you say to that?"

"I say, cousin, that if I were a lawyer, I should be ashamed of a system made up of lies like that!" replied Saxon.

Mr. Trefalden flung himself into his arm-chair, and laughed.

"I won't have you abuse our legal fictions in that way," he said. "These little things are the romance of law, and keep our imaginations from drying up."

"They ought not to be necessary," said Saxon, who could not see the amusing side of John Doe and Richard Roe.

"I grant you that. They have their origin, no doubt, in some defect of the law. But then we are not blessed with a Code Napoleon; and perhaps we should not like it, if we were. Such as our laws are, we must take them, and be thankful. They might be a great deal worse, depend on it."

"Then is it a legal fiction that Castletowers owes Mr. Behrens twenty-five thousand pounds?" asked Saxon.

William Trefalden winced. He had hoped that the woolstapler's name would have escaped Saxon's observation; but it had done nothing of the kind. Saxon remembered every word clearly enough; names, dates, amount of money, and all.

"Precisely," replied the lawyer. "Lord Castletowers no more owes Mr. Behrens twenty-five thousand pounds than you do. He would be a ruined man at this moment, Saxon, if he did."

"He does not behave like a ruined man," said Saxon.

"Of course not. He would not be filling his house with guests and giving balls, if he were.

So now all's explained, and I have your promise."

Saxon looked earnestly in his cousin's face. He fancied that no man could look another in the face and tell a lie. Many persons entertain that belief; but a more mistaken notion does not exist. Your practised liar makes a point of staring into his hearer's eyes, and trusts to that very point for half the effect of his lie. But Saxon would not have believed this had an angel told him so. Therefore he looked in his cousin's face for evidence—and therefore, when William Trefalden gave him back his look with fearless candour, his doubts were at once dispelled, and he promised unhesitatingly.

"That's well," said the lawyer. "And now, Saxon, sit down and tell me what you have come to say."

"It's a long story," replied Saxon.

"I am used to hearing long stories."

"But I am not used to telling them; and I hardly know where to begin. It's about a lady."

"About a lady?" repeated William Trefalden; and Saxon could not but observe that his cousin's voice was by no means indicative of satisfaction.

"In fact," added the young man, hastily, "it's about two or three ladies."

Mr. Trefalden held up his hands.

"Two or three ladies!" said he. "How shocking! Is Miss Colonna one of them?"

"Oh dear no!" replied Saxon, emphatically—perhaps a little too emphatically. And then he plunged into his story, beginning at his first meeting with Miss Rivière at the Waterloo Bridge station, and ending with the adventure in the mausoleum.

Mr. Trefalden heard him to the end very patiently, putting in a question now and then, and piecing the facts together in his mind as they were brought before him. At length Saxon came to a pause, and said:

"That's all, cousin; and now I want you to tell me what I can do."

"What do you want to do?" asked the lawyer.

"I want to help them, of course."

"Well, you have the young lady's address. Send her a cheque for fifty pounds."

"She wouldn't take it, if I did. No, no, cousin William, that's not the way. It must be done much more cleverly. I want them to have money regularly—twice a year, you know—enough to keep her poor mother in Italy, and pay the doctor's bills, and all that."

"But this annuity from Lady Castletowers"

"Lady Castletowers is as hard and cold as marble," interrupted Saxon, indignantly. "*I* had rather starve than take a penny from her. If you had heard how grudgingly she promised that miserable twenty pounds!"

"I never supposed that her ladyship had a hand open as day, for melting charity," said Mr. Trefalden.

"Charity!" echoed Saxon.

"Besides, I doubt that it *is* charity. There must be some claim. Surely I have heard the name of Rivière in connexion with the Wynncliffs or the Pierrepoints . . . and yet . . . Pshaw! if Keckwitch were here he could tell me in a moment!"

And Mr. Trefalden leaned back thoughtfully in his chair.

"I wish you could suggest a way by which I might do something for them," said Saxon. "I want them to get it, you see, without knowing where it comes from."

"That makes it difficult," said Mr. Trefalden.

"And yet it must not seem like almsgiving."

"More difficult still."

"I thought, if it were possible to give her some sort of commission," said Saxon, doubtfully, "a commission for coloured photographs of the Italian coast, you know would that do?"

"It is not a bad idea," replied the lawyer. "It might do, if skilfully carried out; but I think I hear Keckwitch in the office."

And then Mr. Trefalden went in search of his head clerk, leaving Saxon to amuse himself as well as he could with the dingy map and the still more dingy law books.

At the end of a long half hour, he came back with a paper of memoranda in his hand.

"Well?" said Saxon, who was tired to death of his solitary imprisonment.

"Well; I believe I know all that is to be learned up to a certain point; and I have, at all events, found out who your railway heroine is. It's a somewhat romantic story, but you must sit down and listen patiently while I relate it."

THE FIRE BRIGADE.

The fire-engines of London, including the puffing Billies which make such a ferment of steam and smoke along the streets, now belong to the public, or at least will do so as soon as the recent statute comes into operation. Strange it may appear to continental nations that these invaluable aids to the security of our dwellings have hitherto been absolutely unrecognised by the government, the municipality, or any public body.

For a period of ninety years there has really been only one statute in operation containing compulsory rules as to fire-engines; and this refers only to the little half-pint squirts known to us as parish engines. It is to the effect that every parish must keep one large engine and one small, one leathern pipe, and a certain number of ladders. What the parishes might have done if no other organisation had sprung up, we do not know; but the insurance companies having taken up the matter, the parishes backed out, doing only just as little as the law actually compelled, and doing that little about as ineffectively as possible. It used to be fine fun to see the magnificent beadle and his troop of young leather-breeches drag the parish engine

to a fire, and profess to pump upon the flames. But that fun has sadly waned; some of the engines have died from asthma or rickets, or have been laid up with rheumatism in the joints; while others are so rusty and dusty, and the key of the engine-house is so likely to be lost, that we can afford to forget them altogether.

No; it is to the insurance offices, and not to any governing or official body whatever, that we are indebted for our capital fire-engines, and the small army of brave fellows who attend them. The system was a self-interested one, of course, in the first instance; seeing that the companies were not bound to take care of any property save that in which they were directly concerned. But the curious part of the matter is, that the companies have long ceased to feel that kind of interest, and have actually kept up the engines and the brigade-men at a loss, until the public authorities should fill up the gap. In the first instance, the fire insurance companies thought fire-engines an essential part of their establishments; seeing that the less damage was inflicted on the property for which they had granted policies, the less they would have to pay to the persons insured. They bought, each company for itself, as many fire-engines as they chose, and paid for as many men as they chose to manage them. When a fire occurred, out rushed these engines, with no paucity of heroic daring on the part of the men. But then two evils arose. Each corps cared only for such houses as were insured in one particular office, and deemed it no matter of duty to save adjacent property. The other evil was, that the men quarrelled with each other as to precedent claims for reward, and sometimes fought while the flames were blazing. To lessen if not remove these evils, was the purpose of a very useful arrangement made about forty years ago. The managing director of the Sun Fire Office proposed that, without interfering with the independent action of the companies in other ways, they should place all their fire-engines in one common stock, to be managed by one superintendent, under a code of laws applicable to all the firemen; the system to be administered with due impartiality to all the partners, and paid for out of a common purse, to which all should contribute. It was a sagacious suggestion, proper to come from the largest of the companies. As some minds move more slowly than others, so do some companies fall in more readily than others with a new and bold scheme. At first the Sun, the Union, and the Royal Exchange were the only companies which entered cordially into the scheme; the others "didn't see it." Then the Atlas and the Phœnix joined. This limited partnership lasted till the year eighteen hundred and thirty-three, when all the companies assisted in the formation of the London Fire-Engine Establishment. Mr. Braidwood threw his energies into its organisation, and gallantly headed the brigade-men in their dangerous duties for some thirty years; but he fell in the great fire at Tooley-street four years ago—a brave man dying at his post.

The arrangement of this fire establishment is peculiar. Any insurance company may belong to it, on paying a fair quota of expenses; and the total number has gradually risen to about thirty. Each board of directors sends one or more delegates to represent it, and the delegates form a committee for managing the system. All the engines and apparatus, floating engines, and engine-houses, belong to the committee; and out of the funds provided by the several companies, the committee pays the salaries of the superintendent, inspectors, and firemen. The metropolis has been divided into a certain number of districts, convenient as to size and relative position; and each district has a station at which the engines are kept, with firemen always ready to dash out when their services are needed. These head-quarters of districts, to which the boys "run to fetch the engines," are at Watling-street, Tooley-street, Southwark Bridge-road, Wellclose-square, Jeffrey's-square, Shadwell, Rotherhithe, Whitecross-street, Farringdon-street, Holborn, Chandos-street, Crown-street, Waterloo-road, Wells-street, Baker-street, King-street, and Horseferry-road. Captain Shaw, the present commander-in-chief of the brigade, pitches his camp at Watling-street. These stations have engines and men ready day and night. The general allowance is three engines, four horses, and about nine men to each station. Electric wires extend from station to station, affording means for communicating the news of a fire very quickly; and the men pride themselves on the rapidity with which they can horse their engines and start off. The most prominent novelty in the organisation of the system is the steam fire-engine, which drives the water forth in a jet such as no engine worked by hand power can equal. During the International Exhibition, there was a grand field-day of steam fire-engines in Hyde Park, at which Marshals Shand and Mason, General Merryweather, and other steam magnates, showed what they could do. One engine shot forth three hundred gallons of water in a minute; and another sent up a jet to a prodigious height, showing how useful such a power would be when a lofty building is on fire. In some of the steam-engines, such is the arrangement of the boiler and flues, the water can be raised from the freezing temperature to the boiling point in ten or twelve minutes. The attendant genii have not to wait for steam before they start; they fill the boiler with water, light the fire, gallop away, frighten all the old women, delight all the boys, and nearly madden all the dogs; and by the time they arrive at the scene of conflagration, the water boils and the steam is ready for working. Captain Shaw speaks highly of these steam fire-engines; and more and more of them are to be seen rattling through the metropolis. All the engines, steam and hand, have their regular quota of apparatus stowed in and around them —scaling-ladders, canvas sheets, lengths of hose, lengths of rope, nose-pipes, rose-jets, hooks, saws, shovels, pole-axes, crow-bars, wrenches, &c.

Fires are multiplying quite as fast as the population, despite the fact that fire-proof construction of buildings is more adopted than ever. London heads the list with fourteen hundred fires annually; Liverpool follows with three hundred, Manchester with about two hundred and fifty, and Glasgow with over two hundred. In America, New York and Philadelphia both range between three and four hundred; Paris about equals Liverpool; Berlin and Hamburg each about equals Manchester. The difference between any one year and the next is never very considerable; for a sort of law of human carelessness prevails, leading us to a pretty steady aggregate of mishaps. Captain Shaw will not include "chimneys" or "false alarms" among his fourteen hundred. In one of the recent years there were sixteen days with no fire, one day with nine fires; but the average is between three and four fires per day. The late Mr. Braidwood tried to ascertain whether the social and industrial habits of the people lead to a predominance of fires at particular seasons, days, and hours. In one year, August was most disastrous, October least; Tuesday the most disastrous day, Wednesday the least. There is no reason traceable for this; and as the disastrous months and days differed in other years, we may pass the matter by. There are reasons, however, connected with the social habits of Londoners in respect to fire and light, which render intelligible the statement that more fires break out about ten or eleven in the evening, and fewer at six or seven in the morning, than at any other periods of the day. As to the causes of fire, one out of every six or seven is set down either as "wilful," "suspicious," or "unknown." The known causes, besides the more obvious connected with flues, ovens, boilers, gas explosions, include "cinders laid by hot," "poker left in the fire," "reading in bed," "playing with lucifers," "cigar-ends and pipe-lights thrown down carelessly," "sun set fire to fusees," "cat upset linen-horse," "cat ignite lucifers," in fact, we are inclined to think that puss is made responsible for more sins than she really commits, in this as in other kinds of wickedness. The terrible crime of arson—terrible in relation to the peril to innocent life it brings with it—we say nothing of here; the insurance companies suspect more than they openly accuse.

In France, the system is military; the sappers and miners, or sapeurs-pompiers, are the firemen when on home-duty, in whatever town it may be. The fire-engines are small, but very numerous; and as Paris houses have more complete and lofty party walls than those of London, rendering the spread of fire from house to house less likely, the engines and the sapeurs suffice. In Germany, many of the larger towns empower the police to demand the assistance of the inhabitants in case of fire. A night-watchman is perched upon some high place; when he sees a fire he fires a gun, and telegraphs with lanterns; the inhabitants then drag the fire-engines in the direction shown by him. In America, the volunteer system is adopted. New York, Boston, Philadelphia, Chicago, Detroit, Pittsburg, San Francisco, and most of the large towns, have their respective volunteer fire-brigades. At New York there are no less than two thousand of these volunteers, grouped into eight brigades; and a dashing sight it seems to be when they have their annual procession through the city. Captain Lennard says that San Francisco is divided into a number of wards, each of which has its quota of engines, firemen, and hook-and-ladder men. A tocsin bell at the station of each ward gives the sound of alarm to the neighbouring wards, and the alarm of fire is thus speedily disseminated through the city. The firemen are a fine body of young men, in a smart yet suitable working dress, consisting of a red shirt and trousers, a belt, and a helmet, the latter indicating which corps the fireman belongs to, such as the First or Second Tigers. The fire-engines are generally beautiful models of their kind, very light, and in some cases decorated with silver ornaments. The larger engines are worked by steam, and send forth an immense body of water. By the rules of the several corps, a volunteer fireman, however engaged, is bound when the fire tocsin rings to don his helmet and red shirt and appear at his post. The hook-and-ladder men attend the firemen, and render service like that rendered by our admirable fire-escape brigade. The example of America is not wholly lost upon us here in England. The dock companies mostly possess private engines; so do many of our large public establishments, and many large mansions. But the voluntary system, properly so called, is that which is intended to serve others as much as ourselves. Hodges's Distillery certainly takes the lead among such, so far as London is concerned. Well-appointed fire-engines, for steam as well as manual power, firemen clothed and accoutred at all points, an observatory whence a look-out is maintained all night, fire bells at the residence and the distillery, half a mile of hose or leathern water-pipe, horses and harness kept in such readiness that an engine can be sent off to the scene of a fire within three minutes after the fire-bell is heard, a lieutenant to command the men under the proprietor as captain—there is something very gallant about this, and we touch hat to Mr. Hodges. This brigade has gone out to attend more than a hundred fires in twelve months, and not simply on the Lambeth side of the water. The example is spreading. Early in the present year it was stated that there were at that time forty-three Volunteer Fire Brigades in Great Britain, possessing seventy manual and steam fire-engines.

There is something catching, not only in fire, but in the exciting enthusiasm connected with a large conflagration in London. One of our noble dukes has had a telegraphic wire laid from the nearest engine-station to his own bedroom, in order that he may jump up and go out to a house on fire, if so disposed; and, not many weeks ago, the same nobleman gave an afternoon fête to all the firemen, on the

lawn attached to his mansion. Nay, even the heir to the throne has donned the fireman's helmet, and ridden on the engine to the scene of a conflagration. In a recent fire on a small scale at Marlborough House, the royal fireman mounted on the roof, and did his duty. A fire levels all distinctions. More than one despotic king and emperor on the Continent has shown a relish for this kind of volunteer service, lending a hand, ordering the lazy, encouraging the timid, rewarding the brave, and doing hot battle to save a cottage.

The insurance companies, we have said, wish to get rid of the cost and responsibility of maintaining the engines and the brigade. It is known that there is twice as much uninsured as insured property in the metropolis. The enginemen direct their gallant services equally to all houses and buildings, small and great, insured and uninsured. What is the consequence? The companies do their best to extinguish fires in twice as many buildings with which they have no interest, as in those which are properly insured. If the brigade-men allowed a fire to blaze away because the house was not insured, what a public commotion there would be! And yet the companies get no thanks for their unpaid service. There is no official recognition whatever of the brigade by any governmental, parliamentary, municipal, or parochial authorities.

The London Brigade has received only a few augmentations in its strength during many years past, and is now too weak for the requirements of so vast a city. The companies refuse to strengthen it, because the non-insurers would get the lion's share of the benefit. Three years ago they addressed the Home Secretary on the subject; they pointed out that there is no such anomaly in any other city in Europe or America, announced their intention of discontinuing their fire-engine establishment as soon as it could be done without public inconvenience, offered to transfer their establishment to some well-constituted public body on easy terms, suggested a small house-rate of a farthing or a halfpenny in the pound to defray the annual expenses, and expressed their willingness to render aid in every way towards the development of the new scheme. A committee of the House of Commons, in the same year, supported these recommendations, and named the Commissioners of Police as a fitting body to be entrusted with the work. In the years 'sixty-three and 'sixty-four the matter was well talked over; and now we have an act (lately passed) which defines what is to be done. The Metropolitan Board of Works, and not the Commissioners of Police, are to have the management. On the first day of next year the new order of things will begin. The board are to build or buy new fire-engines and fire-escapes, or to buy up those now existing, whether from companies or societies, at their discretion. They will form a brigade of their own, and will pension off such of the brigade-men (if any) as they do not want. They may establish fire-engine stations at as many parts of the metropolis as they choose, and may make all necessary contracts with water companies and telegraph companies. They may draw up a scale of salaries, gratuities, and pensions for those employed by them in these duties. They may make arrangements with parishes for a transfer of parish engines and men. The government is to contribute ten thousand a year, on account of so many of the government establishments being in the metropolis. The fire insurance companies are to contribute thirty-five pounds for every million sterling of property insured by them, as an honorarium for the new brigade's extinguishing of fires in insured property. The remaining expenses are to be defrayed by an additional halfpenny in the pound on the poor-rates. For the good working of the statute, intimate relations are to exist between the new brigade, the police, and the insurance companies, in all that relates to property under fire. Lastly—a hint to those who neglect the chimney-sweeper—a chimney on fire will entail a penalty of twenty shillings on the owner or occupier of the room to which the chimney may belong.

A FEW SATURNINE OBSERVATIONS.

Here is a gentleman at our doors, Mr. R. A. Proctor, who has written a book upon that planet Saturn, and he asks us to stroll out in his company, and have a look at the old gentleman. It is a long journey to Saturn, for his little place is nine and a half times further from the sun than ours, and his is not a little place in comparison with our own tenement, because Saturn House is seven hundred and thirty-five times bigger than Earth Lodge.

The people of Earth Lodge made Saturn's acquaintance very long ago; nobody remembers how long. Venus and Jupiter being brilliant in company, may have obtruded themselves first upon attention in the evening parties of the stars, and Mars, with his red face and his quick movement, couldn't remain long unobserved. Saturn, dull, slow, yellow faced, might crawl over the floor of heaven like a gouty and bilious nabob, and be overlooked for a very little while, but somebody would soon ask, Who is that sad-faced fellow with the leaden complexion, who sometimes seems to be standing still or going backwards?

He was the more noticeable, because those evening parties in the sky differ from like parties on earth in one very remarkable respect as to the behaviour of the company. We hear talk of dancing stars, and the music of the spheres, but, in fact, except a few, all keep their places, with groups as unchanging as those of the guests in the old fabled banquet, whom the sight of the head of Medusa turned to stone. Only they wink, as the stone guests probably could not. In and out among this company of fixtures move but a few privileged stars, as our sister the moon and our neighbours the planets. These alone thread the maze of the company of statues,

dancing round their sun, who happens to be one of the fixed company, to the old tune of Sun in the middle and can't get out. Some of the planets run close, and some run in a wide round, some dance round briskly, and some slip slowly along. Once round is a year, and Saturn, dancing in a wide round outside ours, so that in each round he has about nine times as far to go, moves at a pace about three times slower than ours. His year, therefore, is some twenty-seven times longer; in fact, a year in the House of Saturn is as much as twenty-nine years five months and sixteen days in our part of the world. What, therefore, we should consider to be an old man of eighty-eight, would pass with Saturn for a three-year-old.

A hundred and fifty years ago, Bishop Wilkins did not see why some of his posterity should not find out a conveyance to the moon, and if there be inhabitants, have commerce with them. The first twenty miles, he said, is all the difficulty; and why, he asked, writing before balloons had been discovered, may we not get over that? No doubt there are difficulties. The journey, if made at the rate of a thousand miles a day, would take half a year; and there would be much trouble from the want of inns upon the road. Nevertheless, heaviness being a condition of closeness and gravitation to the earth, if one rose but the first twenty miles, that difficulty of our weight would soon begin to vanish, and a man—clear of the influence of gravitation—might presently stand as firmly in the open air as he now does upon the ground. If stand, why not go? With our weight gone from us, walking will be light exercise, cause little fatigue, and need little nourishment. As to nourishment, perhaps none may be needed, as none is needed by those creatures who, in a long sleep, withdraw themselves from the heavy wear and tear of life. "To this purpose," says Bishop Wilkins, "Mendoca reckons up divers strange relations. As that of Epimenides, who is storied to have slept seventy-five years. And another of a rustic in Germany, who, being accidentally covered with a hayrick, slept there for all autumn and the winter following, without any nourishment." Though, to be sure, the condition of a man free of all weight is imperfectly suggested by the man who had a hayrick laid atop of him. But what then? Why may not smells nourish us as we walk moonward upon space, after escape from all the friction and the sense of burden gravitation brings? Plutarch and Pliny, and divers other ancients, tell us of a nation in India that lived only upon pleasing odours; and Democritus was able for divers days together to feed himself with the mere smell of hot bread. Or, if our stomachs must be filled, may there not be truth in the old Platonic principle, that there is in some part of the world a place where men might be plentifully nourished by the air they breathe, which cannot be so likely to be true of any other place as of the ethereal air above this. We have heard of some creatures, and of the serpent, that they feed only upon one element, namely, earth. Albertus Magnus speaks of a man who lived seven weeks together upon the mere drinking of water. Rondoletius affirms that his wife did keep a fish in a glass of water without any food for three years, in which space it was constantly augmented, till at first it could not come out of the place at which it was put in, and at length was too big for the glass itself, though that were of large capacity. So may it be with man in the ethereal air. Onions will shoot out and grow as they hang in common air. Birds of paradise, having no legs, live constantly in and upon air, laying their eggs on one another's backs, and sitting on each other while they hatch them. Rondoletius tells, from the history of Hermolaus Barbarus, of a priest who lived forty years upon mere air. And, if none of these possibilities be admitted, why, we can take our provision with us. Once up the twenty miles, we could carry any quantity of it the rest of the way, for a ship-load would be lighter than a feather. Sleep, probably, with nothing to fatigue us, we should no longer require; but if we did, we cannot desire a softer bed than the air, where we may repose ourselves firmly and safely as in our chambers.

As for that difficulty of the first twenty miles, it is not impossible to make a flying chariot and give it motion through the air. If possible, it can be made large enough to carry men and stores, for size is nothing if the motive faculty be answerable thereto—the great ship swims as well as the small cork, and an eagle flies in the air as well as a little gnat. Indeed, we might have regular Great Eastern packets plying between London and No Gravitation Point, to which they might take up houses, cattle, and all stores found necessary to the gradual construction of a town upon the borders of the over-ether route to any of the planets. Stations could be established, if necessary, along the routes to the Moon, Mars, Venus, Saturn, and the rest of the new places of resort; some London Society could create and endow a new Bishop of Jupiter; and daring travellers would bring us home their journals of a Day in Saturn, or Ten Weeks in Mars, while sportsmen might make parties for the hippogriff shooting in Mercury, or bag chimeras on the Mountains of the Moon.

Well, in whatever way we may get there, we are off now for a stroll to Saturn, with Mr. R. A. Proctor for comrade and cicerone, but turning a deaf ear to him whenever, as often occurs, he is too learned for us, and asks us to "let N P′ P″ N′ represent the northern half of Saturn's orbit (viewed in perspective), *n* E n′ E′ the earth's orbit, and N p p′ p″ N′ the projection of Saturn's orbit on the plane of the earth's orbit. Let N S N′ be the line of Saturn's nodes on this plane, and let S P′ be at right angles to N S, N′, so that when at P′ Saturn is at his greatest distance from the ecliptic on the northern side." When of such things we are asked to let them be, we let them be, and are, in the denseness of our ignorance, only too glad to be allowed, not to say asked,

to do so. We attend only, like most of our neighbours, to what is easy to us. Sun is gold, and moon is silver; Mars is iron, Mercury quicksilver, which we, in fact, rather like still to call Mercury, thinking nothing at all of the imprisoned god with the winged heels, when we ask how is the mercury in the thermometer. Jove is tin, yes, by Jove, tin is the chief among the gods, says little Swizzles, who, by a miracle, remembers one thing that he learnt at school—Jove's chieftainship among the heathen deities. Venus is copper, for the Cyprian is Cuprian; and as for Saturn, he is lead. A miserable old fellow they made Saturn out in the days of the star-decipherers. Mine, Chaucer makes Saturn say, is the drowning in wan waters, the dark prison, the strangling and hanging, murmur of discontent, and the rebellion of churls. I am the poisoner and the housebreaker, I topple down the high halls and make towers fall upon their builders, earth upon its miners. I sent the temple roof down upon Samson. I give you all your treasons, and your cold diseases, and your pestilence. This is the sort of estimation in which our forefathers held the respectable old gentleman we are now going out to see.

When Galileo's eyes went out towards Saturn through his largest telescope—which, great as were the discoveries it made, was clumsier and weaker than the sort of telescope now to be got for a few shillings at any optician's shop—he noticed a peculiarity in the appearance of Saturn which caused him to suppose that Saturn consisted of three stars in contact with one another. A year and a half later he looked again, and there was the planet round and single as the disc of Mars or Jupiter. He cleaned his glasses, looked to his telescope, and looked again to the perplexing planet. Triform it was not. "Is it possible," he asked, "that some mocking demon has deluded me?" Afterwards the perplexity increased. The two lesser orbs reappeared, and grew and varied in form strangely: finally they lost their globular appearance altogether, and seemed each to have two mighty arms stretched towards and encompassing the planet. A drawing in one of his manuscripts would suggest that Galileo discovered the key to the mystery, for it shows Saturn as a globe resting upon a ring. But this drawing is thought to be a later addition to the manuscript. It was only after many perplexities of others, about half a century later, that Huygens, in the year sixteen 'fifty-nine, announced to his contemporaries that Saturn is girdled about by a thin flat ring, inclined to the ecliptic, and not touching the body of the planet. He showed that all variations in the appearance of the ring are due to the varying inclinations of its plane towards us, and that being very thin, it becomes invisible when its edge is turned to the spectator or the sun. He found the diameter of the ring to be as nine to four to the diameter of Saturn's body, and its breadth about equal to the breadth of vacant space between it and the surface of the planet.

The same observer, Huygens, four years earlier, discovered one of Saturn's satellites. Had he looked for more he could have found them. But six was the number of known planets, five had been the number of known satellites, our moon, and the four moons of Jupiter, which Galileo had discovered; one moon more, made the number of the planets and of the satellites to be alike, six, and this arrangement was assumed to be exact and final. But in sixteen 'seventy-one another satellite of Saturn was discovered by Cassini, who observed that it disappears regularly during one half of its seventy-nine days' journey round its principal. Whence it is inferred that this moon has one of its sides less capable than the other of reflecting light, and that it turns round on its own axis once during its seventy-nine days' journey; Saturn itself spinning once round on its axis in as short a time as ten hours and a half. Cassini afterwards discovered three more satellites, and called his four the Sidera Lodoicea, Ludovickian Stars, in honour of his patron, Louis the Fourteenth. Huygens had discovered, also, belts on Saturn's disc. Various lesser observations on rings, belts, and moons of Saturn continued to be made until the time of the elder Herschel, who, at the close of the last century, discovered two more satellites, established the relation of the belts to the rotation of the planet, and developed, after ten years' careful watching, his faith in the double character of its ring. "There is not, perhaps," said this great and sound astronomer, "another object in the heavens that presents us with such a variety of extraordinary phenomena as the planet Saturn: a magnificent globe encompassed by a stupendous double ring; attended by seven satellites; ornamented with equatorial belts; compressed at the poles; turning on its axis; mutually eclipsing its rings and satellites, and eclipsed by them; the most distant of the rings also turning on its axis, and the same taking place with the furthest of the satellites; all the parts of the system of Saturn occasionally reflecting light to each other—the rings and moons illuminating the nights of the Saturnian, the globe and moons enlightening the dark parts of the rings, and the planet and rings throwing back the sun's beams upon the moons when they are deprived of them at the time of their conjunctions." During the present century, other observers have detected more divisions of the ring, one separating the outer ring into two rings of equal breadth seems to be permanent. It is to be seen only by the best telescopes, under the most favourable conditions. Many other and lesser indications of division have also at different times been observed. Seventeen years ago an eighth satellite of Saturn was discovered by Mr. Bond in America, and by Mr. Lassell in England. Two years later, that is to say, in November, eighteen 'fifty, a third ring of singular appearance was discovered inside the two others by Mr. Bond, and, a few days later, but independently, by Mr. Dawes and by Mr. Lassell in England. It is not bright like the others, but dusky, almost purple, and it is transparent, not even distorting the outline of the body of the

planet seen through it. This ring was very easily seen by good telescopes, and presently became visible through telescopes of only four inch aperture. In Herschel's time it was so dim that it was figured as a belt upon the body of the planet. Now it is not only distinct, but it has been increasing in width since the time of its discovery.

These were not all the marvels. One of the chief of the wonders since discovered, was a faint overlapping light, differing much in colour from the ordinary light of the ring, which light, a year and a half ago, Mr. Wray saw distinctly stretched on either side from the dark shade on the ball overlapping the fine line of light by the edge of the ring to the extent of about one-third of its length, and so as to give the impression that it was the dusky ring, very much thicker than the bright rings, and seen edge-wise, projected on the sky. Well may we be told by our guide, Mr. Proctor, that no object in the heavens presents so beautiful an appearance as Saturn, viewed with an instrument of adequate power. The golden disc, faintly striped with silver-tinted belts; the circling rings, with their various shades of brilliancy and colour; and the perfect symmetry of the system as it sweeps across the dark background of the field of view, combine to form a picture as charming as it is sublime and impressive.

But what does it all mean? What is the use of this strange furniture in the House of Saturn, which is like nothing else among the known things of the universe? Maupertuis thought that Saturn's ring was a comet's tail cut off by the attraction of the planet as it passed, and compelled to circle round it thenceforth and for ever. Buffon thought the ring was the equatorial region of the planet which had been thrown off and left revolving while the globe to which it had belonged contracted to its present size. Other theories also went upon the assumption that the rings are solid. But if they are solid, how is it that they exhibit traces of varying division and reunion, and what are we to think of certain mottled or dusky stripes concentric with the rings, which stripes, appearing to indicate that the ring where they occur is semi-transparent, also are not permanent? Then, again, what are we to think of the growth within the last seventy years of the transparent dark ring which does not, as even air would, refract the image of that which is seen through it, and that is becoming more opaque every year? Then, again, how is it that the immense width of the rings has been steadily increasing by the approach of their inner edge to the body of the planet? The bright ring once twenty-three thousand miles wide, was five thousand miles wider in Herschel's time, and has now a width of twenty-eight thousand three hundred on a surface of more than twelve thousand millions of square miles, while the thickness is only a hundred miles or less. Eight years ago, Mr. J. Clerk Maxwell obtained the Adams prize of the University of Cambridge for an essay upon Saturn's rings, which showed that if they were solid there would be necessary to stability an appearance altogether different from that of the actual system. But if not solid are they fluid, are they a great isolated ocean poised in the Saturnian mid air? If there were such an ocean, it is shown that it would be exposed to influences forming waves that would be broken up into fluid satellites.

But possibly the rings are formed of flights of disconnected satellites, so small and so closely packed that, at the immense distance to which Saturn is removed, they appear to form a continuous mass, while the dark inner mass may have been recently formed of satellites drawn by disturbing attractions or collisions out of the bright outer ring, and so thinly scattered that they give to us only a sense of darkness without obscuring, and of course without refracting, the surface before which they spin. This is, in our guide's opinion, the true solution of the problem, and to the bulging of Saturn's equator, which determines the line of superior attraction, he ascribes the thinness of the system of satellites in which each is compelled to travel near the plane of the great planet's equator.

Whatever be the truth about these vast provisions for the wants of Saturn, surely there must be living inhabitants there to whose needs they are wisely adapted. Travel among the other planets would have its inconveniences to us of the earth. Light walking as it might be across the fields of ether, we should have half our weight given to us again in Mars or Mercury, while in Jupiter our weight would be doubled, and we should drag our limbs with pain. In Saturn, owing to the compression of the vast light globe and its rapid rotation, a man who weighs twelve stone at the equator, weighs fourteen stone at the pole. Though vast in size, the density of the planet is small, for which reason we should not find ourselves very much heavier by change of ground from Earth to Saturn. We should be cold, for Saturn gets only a ninetieth part of the earth's allowance of light and heat. But then there is no lack of blanket in the House of Saturn, for there is a thick atmosphere to keep the warmth in the old gentleman's body and to lengthen the Saturnian twilights. As for the abatement of light, we know how much light yet remains to us when less than a ninetieth part of the sun escapes eclipse. We see in its brightness, as a star, though a pale one, the reflexion of the sunshine Saturn gets, which if but a ninetieth part of our share, yet leaves the Sun of Saturn able to give five hundred and sixty times more light than our own brightest moonshine. And then what long summers! The day in Saturn is only ten and a half hours long, so that the nights are short, and there are twenty-four thousand six hundred and eighteen and a half of its own days to the Saturnian year. But the long winters! And the Saturnian winter has its gloom increased by eclipses of the sun's light by the rings. At Saturn's equator these eclipses

occur near the equinoxes and last but a little while, but in the regions corresponding to our temperate zone, they are of long duration. Apart from eclipse the rings lighten for Saturn the short summer nights, and lie perhaps as a halo under the sun during the short winter days.

FATHERS.

Time, who is the Edax rerum, has become most voracious in this, the latter half of the nineteenth century. Previous to the era of the "latter half" he was in no hurry over his meals. He masticated his victuals well, and fully digested one dish before he attacked another. But now, as if he were getting gluttonous in his old age, he gobbles up the whole feast the moment it is set before him. It is really alarming to see that old man with the scythe sitting at a bench, outside the Half-way House, devouring pounds of the world's sausages and quartern loaves, as if he were eating for a wager! It makes one quite nervous to look at him. What if he should over-eat himself, upset the sand-glass, and die of a surfeit—thus putting an end at once to himself and the century!

When the old gentleman first began to be gluttonous he made a light meal of the most substantial things. Stage-coaches were a wafer, which he took one morning with his cup of coffee; rotten boroughs, and the system thereto pertaining, were a game pasty (rather high), which he disposed of at lunch; the wooden walls of old England, that pièce de résistance under which his board had so long groaned, was polished off to the last morsel at dinner; commercial duties were a thin slice of bread-and-butter for his tea, and religious disabilities served him for a light supper. And he had little snacks between whiles.

Mark how he snapped up the old-fashioned father at a mouthful. There is not a vestige of him left. He is clean gone: high-collared coat, short waistcoat, strapped pantaloons, terrestrial globe, compasses, retort and all. There is not so much as a brass button of him remaining.

The old patriarchal father, who began with Abraham, lasted a long time. He was such a very tough morsel, I suppose that Edax could not make up his mind to tackle him until he was fairly obliged, by the terms of his wager, to clear him off the plate. This being a fast, go-a-head, flippant, unbelieving, irreverent age, no one will be either surprised or shocked if I express the opinion that the old-fashioned father was a bit of a humbug. I don't think he meant to be a humbug; but the nature of his position imposed upon him a certain deportment, which he was bound by the law and custom of society to maintain.

The patriarchs of old treated their sons as part of their chattels, and were rather their lords and masters than their "affectionate parents." This phrase is, in itself, a witness to the fact that the patriarchal rendering of the popular part of father was adhered to until very recent times. Children, writing home from school, address their fathers and mothers as their "dear parents." In Lord Chesterfield's time, this would have been regarded as an undue familiarity. Indeed, for long after that elegant but mortal lord made his final bow to the world, a boy was accustomed to address his father as, "Honoured Sir," and his mother as, "Honoured Madam." A father, then, was a sort of Jove to his children. The high, solemn, and severe pinnacle upon which he sat marked him out as a being of a superior order. Love was not so much his attribute as justice. No Magna Charta, or bill of rights, or habeas corpus, had invaded the sphere of his dominion. He was judge, jury, witness, and executioner all in one. The good mother, Queen Philippa, might plead for the offenders; but their pardon was granted to her as a favour, not as a right. I am not very old, but I can remember the time when almost every father in Great Britain kept a strap, or a cane, for the special purpose of correcting his children. I had one of the kindest, fondest, most indulgent fathers that ever boy was blessed with; but, in accordance with the paternal custom, which prevailed even at the time of the Reform Bill, he kept a three-tailed strap for the castigation of his boys. I was rarely punished with it; but I can remember every feature of that strap as vividly and distinctly as if it were now hanging up before me on that nail, where it so long hung over our heads, like the sword of Damocles. I can count the cracks in its tails, one of which was shorter than the others, and gave the idea of a little finger on a three-fingered hand. It is not because this strap made an impression, physical or moral, upon me, that I can remember it so distinctly, but because it was an institution. I associate it with the household gods, with the eight-day clock, the barometer, and the family Bible. There was a writer and grainer's flourish at the end of the table of the Ten Commandments in church, and that flourish was in the likeness of the strap. In my eyes the one was as much an institution as the other.

We all remember how these fathers treated us. They loved us of course, and were proud of us, but it was not the paternal thing to show that they entertained those natural—and therefore undignified—sentiments towards us. We were kept under. We were taught, like servants and humble dependents, to know our place, which was the nursery. We were not allowed to sit at table with our parents. We dined at another hour of the day, the governess or the housekeeper presiding at the head of the table. Our food was inferior to that which was reserved for our parents; our dress, too, was inferior. In many parts of the country corduroy was the badge of all our tribe. We went into the grand apartment, the paternal Star Chamber, to make obeisance to our parents, as people go to court. We had our faces washed and our hair brushed for the solemn occasion, and we were carefully tutored to make bows and say "please." How many times,

when in the impetuosity of my filial affection, I have rushed into the grand apartment, have I been challenged with "Where's your bow, sir?" When I have had to return to the door and bob my head and scrape my foot on the carpet. Publicly, in church, we were told that God made us; privately, in the family circle, we were informed that we came from London in a box, or were found in the parsley-bed.

These fathers conducted themselves towards their children as if they, the children, were a lower class, a dangerous class, which it was necessary to suppress and keep down, lest it should obtain universal suffrage and swamp the paternal class altogether. This conduct was, in fact, an application of the prevailing principle of Toryism to the affairs of the family circle. Our fathers resisted the intellectual development of their children as they resisted the Reform Bill. There is possibly more analogy between the cases than we suspect. A parent who allowed his boys to sit at table with him, and mix on terms of intellectual equality with his grown-up relations, was regarded as a dangerous innovator—a demagogue in domestic policy. Boys treated in this rational manner were spoken of as "spoilt," and the good old conservative father pitied them, and prophesied that they would never do any good in the world. In 1831, Lord Russell was a political father "spoiling" his children in this way.

The sovereign receipt for managing boys, which descended from generation to generation, and passed from one to another, was expressed in a very few words. "Be severe with them." That was the golden rule. Never let a boy contradict you; never let him answer again; don't allow him to have an opinion of his own; don't let him talk about matters which he does not understand—and it was considered that boys had no business to understand anything that belonged to the practical affairs of life. Let them learn geography at school, and know how to describe the boundaries; but don't let them know better than you about the natural products of Peru. What can a boy know about guano and its chemical properties? Let him go and learn his lessons; let him learn to say—like a parrot—by what countries or seas Peru is bounded on the north, and the south, and the east, and the west; but don't let him presume to teach his father how to grow turnips.

The severity of some of the old-fashioned fathers was positively brutal. With full warrant from high and venerable authorities, they carried the maxim, "Spare the rod and you spoil the child," to the extent of thrashing their boys within an inch of their lives. I remember a very worthy, well-intentioned father, who used to horsewhip his boys first, and then duck them in the horse-pond. Those boys, and many more whom I knew, were punished with a severity which would not now be sanctioned towards convicts. I have seen children crouch and cower like dogs in the presence of their fathers, furtively and in a shrinking way watching their faces for an indication of anger. I remember a boy who, whenever he was spoken to by his affectionate paternal parent, always lifted up his elbow in an attitude of defence. It had become a habit with him. A word was suggestive of a blow; and he was ever ready with his elbow in case of accidents. Such was the faith of those fathers in the virtues of the rod, that they would allow others to punish their children, and sometimes be guilty of the exquisite cruelty of sending a boy to school with a letter containing injunctions to the schoolmaster to give the bearer a sound flogging.

This old-fashioned father—who has died universally unregretted—*made up* for the character. You could tell a father of real life as readily as you can tell the stage king by his brass crown and his fur tippet. The paternal "make-up" was severe. It included a coat with a great deal of collar, a hat with a great deal of crown, a shirt with a great deal of frill, a watch with a great deal of seal, and a walking-stick with a great deal of tassel. It was not until he actually became a father that he thought it necessary to appear in this guise. In his bachelor days he was smart enough and gay enough, both in his manner and attire; but no sooner was it announced to him that he was a father than he put on severe looks and severe clothes. Where he got that wonderful top-heavy hat, that looked as if it had a suit of clothes packed up in the crown of it, that formidable frill resembling the dorsal fin of a pike in full charge upon its enemies, that seal, so huge and imposing that it might have satisfied a lord chancellor, that tassel, that bastion of a collar—where he got all these paternal "properties" I never could discover. But he did get them; he thought it incumbent upon him to get them; and when he put them on he put on with them the severe aspect of the family Jove. How our mothers, even in their coal-scuttle bonnets and leg-of-mutton sleeves, could love him, and have any admiration for him, I never could understand. I am inclined to think that it was the Reform Bill which first undermined this monumental father. Indeed, I believe that the Reform Bill has been the cause of "all the mischief," as some folks call it—including that leakage which has nearly caused the wreck of Noah's ark. I feel sure that if there had been no Reform Bill we should still be eating our beefsteaks with three-pronged steel forks, and lighting our matches by plunging them into bottles of phosphorus.

The monumental father, who was first undermined by the Reform Bill, began to topple over about the time when penny postage was adopted. It was not that he was ashamed to wear a hat like that and a frill like that when a letter could be sent from one end of the kingdom to the other for a penny; but it was because his boys began to see that he was an incongruity, an anomaly, and an anachronism. No: papa did not march with the times, and the young hopeful who did, began to call him "Guv'nor." No more "Honoured Sir" now in the school letters. Boys were grown taller for

their age, and could reach to their fathers' hearts. Hearts, indeed, came into vogue in place of hats, and coats, and frills, and such-like attributes of paternity. Nature, so long tied and bound, managed to free some of her limbs from the cords of the senseless custom which had so long restrained her. When her arms were loosed, it was only like herself that she should embrace her child.

The British father has undergone a great metamorphosis of late years. He has relaxed his old severity of aspect, and become more human. He plays Jove no longer; he has cast aside his tinfoil thunderbolts, and come down from his pasteboard Olympus. He stands confessed a man—a man with the same heart and the same sympathies as those which animate the breasts of boys. It may be said that children have compelled their autocratic fathers to give them a constitution. When they know how to use a knife and fork—which is their qualification for the franchise—they are allowed to sit at the same table with their parents. They are permitted to have a voice in the house, and to exercise their right respectfully to think and have opinions of their own. Love and sympathy and intelligent communion have taken the place of a cold and senseless severity, and children, who formerly were little better than mechanical dolls, to be pushed up and down a stick like monkeys, or squeezed for a bark, like toy dogs, are freed from artificial restraints, and their intelligence is allowed to expand with the natural growth of their minds and bodies.

No human system is perfect; and in treating of Boys in these pages, I ventured to express the fear that children might be forced on too rapidly. This is a danger to be guarded against; but it is easy to guard against incidental dangers when the fundamental system is based upon sound and rational principles. And there is no doubt that the relations which now subsist between parents and children are more in accordance with nature and reason then they have ever been at any previous period of the world's wisdom.

FOREIGN CLIMBS.

If you read to a lady a newspaper paragraph recounting a death through crinoline, whether by burning or by entanglement in a carriage-wheel, she will ask in triumph, "And do *you* never get killed foolishly? What are your battues? What are your Melton Mowbrays? And what, if you please, are your Alpine scrambles? I have as much right to expose myself to a roasting or a pounding, as you have to risk your neck on a gun-flint a thousand feet in height. And it brings me more permanent enjoyment. At best, you have only a few fleeting hours of excitement; you can't *reside* on the point of a needle; whereas, *I* am daily in everybody's way; I can daily swell myself to any dimensions; I have the daily pleasure of draggling my train through the mire, and of frowning on every one who chances to tread on it."

It may be safely stated that many more deaths from accident and imprudence occur amongst the Alps, than ever reach the public eye or ear—certainly those of the British public. To be assured of this, you have only to travel in Switzerland with your ears and eyes open. The increased number we have recently heard of, may be ascribed partly to increased publicity, and partly to the increasing rashness of would-be acrobats calling themselves amateur mountaineers.

But a mountaineer may be assumed to be a person who, dwelling amidst mountains, *uses* them for the purposes of procuring sustenance and shelter for himself, his family, and his cattle; for the chase, and for travelling from one spot in his native country to another. An ambitious adventurer coming from afar, with money and curious appliances, for the sake of scaling, with no practical object or end except the gratification of his personal vanity, peaks and pinnacles never scaled before, is no more a mountaineer than Blondin, wheeling a child in a barrow along his tight-rope, is a mountaineer. And he has not Blondin's excuse for his temerity—a living to get—nor, now, his merit, originality. On the contrary, he is following a comparatively beaten track known to be beset with dangers; while his example is inducing other weak simpletons to come after him and do the same.

Does our snarling philosophy, then, mean to prohibit the pleasures of Alpine excursioning? Certainly not; only, like other pleasures, let them be enjoyed in moderation and with common sense. The fact is—and it cannot be too strongly insisted on—that there really exist three distinct Switzerlands, suspended one over the other at different altitudes. The first—the Switzerland of ladies, children, elderly gentlemen, and ordinary folk in general, includes all the valleys and lakes traversed by railways, highway roads, and steamers, comprising the carriageable passes, such as Mont Cenis, the Simplon, the St. Gothard, and others. These, with the walks and rides branching off from them, afford an immense total of enchanting scenery, which will occupy several years of delightful travel.

The second region, sometimes dovetailing with the first, sometimes soaring above it, takes in the localities which cannot be reached in carriages, but to which prudent lads and lassies may roam on foot or on horseback, with proper precautions. Its limits are necessarily variable and indefinite, depending upon season, weather, nerve, obedience to guides, and the capability of those individuals; of whom it is only justice to say that accidents rarely occur through *their* fault. But as there are plants which gardeners call "half hardy," and which, in fact, are not hardy at all, so there are Swiss excursions commonly regarded as tolerably safe, or slightly dangerous, which in truth are not a bit safe, but are perfectly dangerous. All that can be said is, that you *may* accomplish them with a whole skin, which may also be stated of the ascent of Mount Cervin. Several of the minor less frequented peaks are in the same predicament; as

is one of the most celebrated passes, the Gemmi; witness (omitting obscure native accidents) the French lady, a senator's daughter, whom, two or three summers ago, her stumbling mule pitched over the precipice. Her husband, walking within a few feet of her, heard her one shriek of despair, and she was gone. She was picked up afterwards a mangled mass. The Gemmi, therefore, although a sensational pass, is certainly not a safe one, and it would hardly be pleasant to be caught on that part of it by a thick fog, a snow-storm, or a hurricane.

Our third and uppermost Switzerland supplies the Alpine Club with spots where human foot has never trod, or where the number of its footprints may be counted. It furnishes peaks ascended only by scientific men and human donkeys. Nor is it the first time that fortune has associated those names. When the invading French infantry formed its squares to resist the onslaught of the Egyptian horsemen, a standing joke with the soldiers was the cry, "Savans and asses into the middle!"

Now what, one asks, is the inducement which leads to the essaying of these perilous feats? One would gladly find a reasonable motive; but none is either found or offered. A late secretary to the Alpine Club leaves unanswered the very natural question, "What is the use of scaling precipitous rocks, and being for half an hour at the top of the terrestrial globe?" alleging that these are questions of sentiment, and do not admit of conclusive arguments on either side. But if it once be conceded that life is risked for no earthly use whatever, most people will think that the admission settles the matter most conclusively.

What is the motive of foolhardiness? We have said before, and again say, that the only one discoverable is BRAG. The common-place sport of steeple-chasing is eclipsed and extinguished by pinnacle-chasing. But it is time to be instant in urging that the first ascent of an unclimbed peak, in which only a single life (whether of guide or friend) is lost, confers, not fame, but a painful notoriety, which is a punishment instead of a reward of the exploit.

Is scientific observation the object? Hardly. No problem is solved; no geographical difficulty cleared away. It is not like ascertaining whether at the North Pole there be an open sea, or whether, in the midst of Antarctic ice, there lie a region of mild and habitable temperature. If it be merely wanted to behold the ghastly flame of candles burning at great elevations, or to learn by experiment what vegetables will and will not cook in water boiling fifteen hundred feet above the level of the sea, Mont Blanc is there open, ready, secure, guaranteed to be ascended and descended with the least possible chance of broken bones. Glaciers may be studied, rare minerals, plants, and insects collected, with equal safety. So that a society for the scaling of such heights as the Schreckhorn, the Eiger, and the Matterhorn, contributes about as much to the advancement of science as would a club of young gentlemen who should undertake to bestride all the weathercocks of all the cathedral spires in the United Kingdom.

Is it for the love of the picturesque, and for the sake of the view from the mountain-top, that the gymnast climbs to his giddy eminence? A panorama, however magnificent, will be but carelessly and cursorily scanned during progresses in which one false step, one feeble handhold, is death. But it is notorious that the most difficult peaks do not command the finest views. The eye derives far greater gratification from the scenes displayed by our second region.

Of the manifold surprises in store for the climber, one or two instances will suffice. Professor Tyndall, illustrating the phenomenon now known under the name of Regelation, takes a straight bar of ice, and by passing it successively through a series of moulds, each more curved than the last, finally turns it out as a semi-ring. The straight bar on being squeezed into the curved mould breaks, but by continuing the pressure new surfaces come in contact, and the continuity of the mass is restored. By taking a handful of those small fragments and squeezing them together, they freeze at their points of contact, and the mass becomes one aggregate. "The crossing of snow bridges in the upper regions of the Swiss glaciers, is often rendered possible solely by the regelation of the snow granules. The climber treads the mass carefully, and causes its granules to regelate; he thus obtains an amount of rigidity which, without the act of regelation, would be quite unattainable. To those unaccustomed to such work, the crossing of snow bridges, spanning, as they often do, fissures a hundred feet and more in depth, must appear quite appalling." By way of encouragement, we are previously informed that, in order that this freezing shall take place, the snow ought to be at thirty-two degrees and moist. When below thirty-two degrees and dry, on being squeezed it behaves like salt.

The same great authority, to impress his readers with what happens when heat waves pursue their way unabsorbed, reminds them that a joint of meat might be roasted before a fire, the air around the joint being cold as ice.

"The air on high mountains," he adds, "may be intensely cold, while a burning sun is overhead. The solar rays which, striking on the human skin, are almost intolerable, are incompetent to heat the air sensibly, and we have only to withdraw into perfect shade to feel the chill of the atmosphere. I never, on any occasion, suffered so much from solar heat as in descending from the Corridor to the Grand Plateau of Mont Blanc, on August 13, 1857. Though we were at the time hip deep in snow, the sun blazed against my companion and myself with unendurable power. Immersion in the shadow of the Dôme du Goûté at once changed my feelings, for here the air was at a freezing temperature. It was not, however, sensibly colder than the air through which the sunbeams passed, and I suffered, not from the contact of hot air, but from radiant heat, which had reached me through an icy cold medium."

It may be doubted whether exhausting mountain rambles are the best restorative for hard-worked professional men, who have been pent in cities for the ten months previous. The change of their physical conditions is too abrupt and complete to be healthy. From situations in which they are almost entirely screened from radiation, both from within and without, they rush into floods of light, showers of sunbeams, and other influences darted out by our great luminary, the sun, while they incur sudden losses of animal heat unknown to their city experience. It cannot be a very salutary tonic to be roasted at one end and iced at the other. The effects of the cooking are visible in the noses and lips they bring down to the valley. Starlight nights passed on the mountain-side may have worse effects than the temporary suffering from cold. Moon-blindness, we are told, is caused by the chill produced by radiation from the eyes; the shining of the moon being merely *an accompaniment* to the clearness of the atmosphere. A member of the Alpine Club, who made an ineffectual attempt to ascend the Schreckhorn while it was still a virgin peak, never recovered his eyesight perfectly after the two nights which he spent among the snow.

Michelet, speaking of the beneficial effects of change of air (La Mer, p. 360), says: "Transitions, especially, ought to be made with great caution.

"Can we, without preparation, without some modification of living and regimen, be abruptly transferred from a completely inland climate (Paris, Lyons, or Dijon) to a sea-side climate? Can we, until we have breathed the sea air for a considerable time, begin taking sea baths? Can we, without some habituation of prudent hydrotherapy, commenced inland, brave, in the open air, the nervous constriction, the horripilation caused by cold water which sticks to you as you get out of it, and often with a high wind blowing? These preliminary questions will more and more attract the attention of medical men.

"The extreme rapidity of railway travelling is an anti-medical circumstance. To go, as we do, in twenty hours from Paris to the Mediterranean, traversing different climates from hour to hour, is the most imprudent act in the world for a nervous person to commit. You reach Marseilles with your head in a whirl, full of agitation, inebriated. When Madame de Sévigné took a month to go from Brittany to Provence, she passed gradually and by cautious stages through the violent opposition of those two climates. She proceeded insensibly from the western to the eastern maritime zone, and thence to the inland climate of Burgundy. Then, slowly following the Upper Rhône into Dauphiny, she confronted with less difficulty the high winds of Valence and Avignon. Finally, resting for a while at Aix, in inland Provence, away from the Rhône and from the coast, she became a naturalised Provençale, as far as breathing and the chest were concerned. Then, and then only, she encountered the Mediterranean." Contrast this with the instantaneous flights made now-o'-days from Westminster Hall to the top of Mont Blanc.

We shall be told that "mountaineering" is a manly exercise. It is so, inasmuch as it is not womanly. But it is not noblemanly when it is selfish. Is it manly to expose a parent, a brother, or a wife, to the chance of quite uncalled-for sorrow? To lead them into danger perhaps for the satisfaction of recovering our remains? To tempt hardworking guides, mostly family men, to expose their lives for no adequate object; bringing them, for our amusement, to the condition of Roman gladiators, who might exclaim, "Morituri te salutamus," "We take off our caps to you, on our way to destruction?"

Is gambling manly? A gambler, for the sake of temporary excitement, takes his chance of worldly ruin; but he is led on by the expectation that he will one day make his fortune—perhaps that very day or night. Reckless mountaineering is greater folly than gambling; because, for the sake of overstrained emotions, it risks *all*, with nothing to win but an empty boast.

When Alpine Clubbists hold that it is "a question of sentiment," we may ask whether it be not rather a question of duty. The great argument against suicide urged by moralists is, that a man has not the right to dispose of his life as he pleases. Life is a precious gift, not to be lightly thrown away. It is not a man's own, but a trust conferred upon him by his Maker, to employ to the best of his ability. Has, then, a man the right to cause the wanton sacrifice (even in his own proper person) of a useful member of society, by the snapping of a rope, the slipping of a stone, the failure of a grapnel, or the imperfect freezing of a bridge of snow?

When sensible people discover that they are on a wrong track, they confess it, and retrace their steps. Our climbing enthusiasts may do the same, without exposing themselves to the slightest reproach as to want of courage. Nobody will say or believe that our countrymen (whether Irish, Scotch, or English) are afraid to face danger. But danger should be nobly faced. Compare the man who ascends Mount Cervin, "prepared to conquer the mountain or die," as reported in the newspapers, with him who braves the cholera, or visits typhus patients.

A TREMENDOUS LEAP.

It was, under the circumstances, the oddest, though at the same time the most commonplace and unexciting ghost-story I ever heard in my life. It related to a giant, some ten or twelve feet high, who, many hundred years ago, dwelt on a rather high mountain in ——shire, and greatly oppressed the inhabitants of the neighbouring villages. Since the time of his death, his ghost had, from time to time, appeared in a certain green lane close to the foot of the mountain; where it was apparently persecuted by a troop of smaller ghosts, supposed to represent the victims of his op-

pression. A very stupid tale, such as one might expect to find in a child's story-book, or perhaps in a collection of semi-mythological legends. Its oddity consisted in the circumstance that it afforded the subject of conversation to a party assembled in the parlour of a roadside inn, situated near the haunted lane, and that one of the speakers asserted that he had actually seen the ghost with his own eyes.

Any one who analyses his own feelings with respect to supernatural manifestations, will discover that a ghost-story is terrible just in proportion to the closeness of its connexion with the real life of the present day. If genuine awe is to be inspired, it is absolutely necessary that the originating cause of a spectre should not be more ancient than the reign of Queen Anne. Should the ghost be traced to some unhappy gentleman who committed suicide under one of the Georges, so much the better. And if referred, with convincing evidence, to some one who died last year, it would be absolutely perfect. Unfortunately, this last position involves an ideality of effectiveness that can rarely be obtained, and it is to be remarked that the apparition of a gentleman personally known to a large number of living souls, might have to encounter an ordeal of searching criticism, by no means easy to pass. On the whole, as a good, safe, practical expedient for raising terror, nothing is better than a ghost in a court dress, after the fashion depicted by Hogarth.

Something may be said in favour of the extremely white ghost, which belongs to no period at all—the ghost that was once rendered familiar to the public by the short tragedies performed in Richardson's show, and by Monk Lewis's Castle Spectre. This was the ghost rudely copied by the wicked boors, who constructed spectres with sheets and hollow turnips for the purpose of terrifying old women, and the fact that this base mockery has literally frightened a great many persons out of their wits, sufficiently proves the effectiveness of the appearance. But I would say that the white ghost rather appeals to a primitive than to a cultivated mind—is somewhat vulgar in its strength. The white dress once meant a shroud, and was well suited to a manifestation in a churchyard, but afterwards it assumed any pattern, and meant nothing. The ghost at Richardson's wore a tunic and helmet of surpassing whiteness, and his face was chalked to correspond. The fault of the white ghost is, that it is too abstract.

Still, as an expedient for exciting terror, the stock white ghost of rustic villages is far superior to the ghost that is referable to a time wholly different from our own. Our grandfathers link us with the early Georges, and then take us back to Queen Anne, but when we come (say) to Elizabeth, we find ourselves in a period represented by books and monuments alone, and with which we have no traditional connexion. A ghost in an Elizabethan dress is too historical to be terrible; while as for a baronial ghost in armour, the rumour that such a being haunted any grim castle would fail to scare the most timid old woman in the neighbouring village.

But the spectre of a giant—of an ultra-mythical monster, that probably never lived at all, and, if he did, must have been ten times more wonderful than his own ghost—such a spectre was the very sublime of effeteness. One is accustomed now-a-days to regard a giant as a funny figure. I recollect, when a party of us got up an amateur pantomime on the subject of Jack the Giant Killer at the hospitable mansion of Mr. Bendlads, how a fund of mirth was produced at the appearance of thin Harry Smith, when with infinite bolsters he had stuffed himself into an Ogre. I was the harlequin on that occasion, and executed the flying leap through a supposed window with great applause. I recollect that just as I was in the middle of the leap an uneasy doubt crossed my mind whether the men who were to catch me behind the scenes were really at their post. The doubt was horrible. Could anything like that horror be produced by such a dull phenomenon as the ghost of a giant?

Absorbed in these reflections (the acuteness and profundity of which have, I trust, been appreciated by the reader), I found myself in the very lane which, according to local tradition, was haunted by the insipid spectre. The sun was going down, and, I am ashamed to confess the fact, I felt rising within me a pusillanimous regret that the lane was connected with any ghost whatever, gigantic or otherwise. The practical value of my professed theories was rapidly approaching zero.

I once read, with considerable respect, the theatrical notice which a literary friend of mine wrote for a weekly newspaper on the occasion of some performance of Sheridan's comedy The Rivals. With much shrewdness, as I thought, my friend pointed out a glaring inconsistency in the character of Bob Acres. Why should the aforesaid Bob be so ferociously valiant when writing the challenge, and so obtrusively timid when awaiting the approach of his antagonist? The author had clearly sought to amuse his audience at the expense of truth. So said, or rather wrote my friend, and the exposition of his view occupied nearly a column of close small print. I thought him lengthy, but right. My walk in the haunted lane has convinced me that Sheridan was right, and my friend was wrong.

Still I went on, and soon perceived straight before me a sort of white mist, which extended almost entirely across the road, and was by no means to be accounted for by the general state of the atmosphere, the adjoining fields being entirely free from exhalations of any kind. This was strange, and the phenomenon became stranger still as I approached it. Manifestly the mist had something like a human outline. A large mass, resembling a body, culminated in a smaller one, which seemed like a head, and was split at the bottom into two columns, which, without any great stretch of fancy, might be taken for legs, while towards the head shot out

two other columns, that very tolerably represented arms. All was very vague and undefined, and there was a total absence of minute details. Nevertheless, if a party of schoolboys, on a winter's day, had succeeded in making anything half so like a man, out of snow, they would have deemed themselves artists of no ordinary skill. Whether this were a ghost or a lusus naturæ, there was no doubt it was the spectral giant of whom I had heard so much.

What was I to do? I felt monstrously disinclined to proceed, and I did not relish the notion of waiting till the form dispersed, especially as, instead of rarefying it seemed to become more dense, and I began to observe in the head-like mass a pair of luminous spots, that were by no means a bad imitation of eyes. Should I go back? I rather think I should have adopted that inglorious expedient, had I not, on turning my head, perceived in my rear some half a dozen smaller masses of mist, which likewise vaguely resembled the human form, and which, as they moved towards me, were rendered singularly unpleasant by a sort of chirping sound, of which they seemed to be the source. I had often read of "gibbering" ghosts, without precisely knowing the signification of the participle, just as a cockney poet freely writes about "glades," and "dells," and "dingles," without any very distinct picture before his mind's eye. I perfectly understand the meaning of it now.

The little ghosts, for so I must consent to call them, as they exactly corresponded to the spectral victims of cruelty of which I had heard, were much more formidable than the big one, and rendered retreat morally impossible. The big ghost, at all events, stood still, but these minor phantoms pressed close upon me—closer, and closer—till I felt something extremely cold and clammy touch my ungloved hand.

This was unbearable. A thrill of horror shot through my whole frame, and instinct brought to my mind—if mind I had at the time—the memory of that harlequin's leap by which I had once acquired such honourable distinction. Taking a run, I darted, after the most approved pantomime fashion, through the larger misty form that stood immediately before me.

Never shall I forget the sensation of that dreadful moment. I seemed to be passing through a medium, cold beyond the power of thermometrical expression, and at the same time my ears were stunned by a shriek of agony that might have come from the chained Prometheus.

It is not at all surprising that I was found insensible on the road. A harlequin's leap, with nobody to catch the leaper, is in itself no joke, and here was a leap of the kind in question, accompanied by the most aggravating circumstances. How, as I afterwards heard, I was picked up and carried back to the little inn, and lay for a day or two in a very incapable condition, I need not record at length. It is sufficient to say that no bones were broken—though I had been shaken enough to justify the production of a moderate doctor's bill—and that I soon found myself once more in the parlour of the inn.

An old distich, hackneyed to death, teaches us that

> He who's convinced against his will
> Is of the same opinion still.

I once laid a wager that these lines were or were not (I forget which) in Hudibras, and though I do not remember the result of the search made on the occasion, I perfectly recollect that I lost half-a-crown. Never could the proverbial expression be applied with more perfect accuracy than to my mental case when I was in a convalescent state. I had been convinced of the existence of ghosts very much indeed against my will—sorely against my will, in a most disagreeably strict sense of the word—as many a bone in my skin could testify. Hence I was determined not to yield to such obtrusive convictions. I would disbelieve more sturdily than ever.

Indeed, what more easily explained away than the phantom giant? The beverages vended at the hostelry were not of the best, and I had imbibed rather more than my usual quantity while listening to the interesting discourse in the parlour when I entered the room. My mind was filled with the ridiculous legend I had just heard, and when I encountered a mist that had no distinct shape at all, it was the easiest matter in the world to accommodate to the shapeless mass a form corresponding to the story. Without any determining cause whatever, we all of us, on occasion, make tolerably distinct images out of clouds, burning coals, coffee-grounds, and what not; and here was an obvious determining cause why I should take a mist for a giant, without an approach to that monomania which made Don Quixote mistake a windmill for a similar monster.

While I was vainly striving to scrape a particle of amusement out of a local paper, two persons entered the room who had been the principal speakers in the memorable discussion. One of them, according to his own assertion, had actually seen the spectre; the other was an obstinate disbeliever, newly arrived from another district, and who, having no respect whatever for the popular creed of the village, simply doubted whether his informant was a fool or a mendacious person.

The ghost-seer came in first, and had hardly seated himself than he was joined by his former adversary, who accosted him in a jeering tone:

"Well, Jones, have you seen anything of your friend the ghost again?"

"About the ghost being my friend, Mr. Nicolls, that's neither here nor there," answered Jones; "but if I did not see it last night, I'm a Dutchman."

"You may be a Dutchman, for all I know," brilliantly retorted Nicolls; "but, whether Dutchman or no, you seem to be none the worse for it."

"No, Mr. Nicolls, I flatter myself I have seen that ghost rather too often to be much ruffled when I come across it; and it is not those who

believe least in them things that are always least frightened at them."

This was a blow unintentionally dealt at me, but of course I took no notice.

"Last night, however," proceeded Mr. Jones, "the ghost was very much altered—quite changed like."

"Stood twenty feet in his stockings instead of ten," sneered Mr. Nicolls. "Growed, no doubt."

"No; there you are out, sharp as you think yourself," replied Jones. "If you must know the truth, though you don't deserve to know it, the ghost had a large hole like, right through the middle of his chest. There is no mistake about it, for I saw the moon shining clean through his bosom, while all the rest of him was misty like, as usual."

I rushed out of the room into the open air. I had had an experience too strange for my endurance. I, and I only, knew the cause of the poor spectre's disfigurement. I believe, indeed, that I am the only person recorded in the pages of fact or fiction—the only person, I say, who ever—jumped through a ghost.

NORTH GERMAN HARVEST-HOME.

Towards the end of August, eighteen 'sixty-two, I was at Daheran, a sea-bathing place on a secluded part of the Baltic, and there made the acquaintance of Herr Hillmann, a wealthy "Ritterguttbesitzer"—literally Knight-estate-owner—of the neighbourhood. Herr Hillmann, being not only a wealthy but also a well informed and pleasant man, who, moreover, had a certain amount of English at his command, I soon became very friendly with him, and the result was, that he asked me to spend a few days with him at Basdorf—the one of his extensive farms which he inhabited—in order to witness a harvest-home and peasant wedding at Mecklenburg. Accordingly I gave up the last day of the races, which formed the special attraction of Daheran at that time, and went by rail to Bützow.

Here I was met by a long waggon, the sides of which were formed by a pair of ladders, whence it derived the appellation of "Ladder-waggon," and the seats of two well-stuffed sacks, placed at a little distance, one behind the other, in a cozy bedding of straw. The first of these sacks was the seat of the driver, I occupied the second, and the space behind me received my luggage. This conveyance was drawn by four splendid bay horses, which would not have disgraced Hyde Park in the month of June, had not the harness been made up of very rusty leather and rope's ends. I climbed to my sack, and we drove at a solemn pace out of the station, through the town and past the red brick prison, till we came to the "chaussée," or macadamised high road, where the four bays, upon a gentle admonition from Friedrich, went off at the mildest trot ever performed by horses. Thus we proceeded, till after about an hour and a half we left the chaussée and entered a country road, the recollection of which is still enough to make my bones ache: for the soil here being of the heaviest wheat-growing description, and the road commissioners generally contenting themselves with that part of their duties which obliges them to go to a round of country dinners (after which they are all more or less in a state such as makes them forget their sufferings on the road thither), I was most forcibly impressed with every rut and flint that our wheels encountered. An hour and a quarter of this brought us to the manor-house of Basdorf, Herr Hillmann's "estate," the approach to which consisted of a long avenue of lime-trees, flanked on either side by the outhouses—i.e. the stables, cowhouses, barns, and other farm buildings—and of a causeway, the like of which my English mind could scarcely have accepted as a possibility. The ruts between the boulders that formed the pavement were such as to oblige the horses to go at a procession pace, yea, sometimes to come to a perfect stand-still. But at last we did arrive at the door of a long one-storied house, that stood in the shade of a row of magnificent lime-trees. Hostess and host—as perfectly well bred and educated a lady and gentleman as one could wish to see, received me with frank hospitality, and led me through a spacious hall into a large whitewashed apartment on the right, with homely but comfortable furniture, and a rosewood grand piano; on a side-table in this room, where all the meals were taken (no less than six a day: breakfast at eight, luncheon at eleven, dinner at half-past one, coffee with cake at three, "vesperbrod," a kind of afternoon luncheon, generally consisting of bread-and-butter and cold meats, to which tea is added sometimes, at half-past five, and supper—hot—at nine o'clock), a cold and very appetising collation was laid out, of which I gladly partook in company with my entertainers. When our acquaintance had in this way been cemented, we took a stroll in the garden that flanked the house on either side, and spread a considerable distance behind it—a garden that was a wonderful conglomeration of park, flower-garden, kitchen-garden, orchard, wilderness, and stately avenues of grand old oaks and beeches. Beguiling the walk with pleasant chat, we had reached the edge of a thick brushwood, when we suddenly heard a most piteous whine. Herr Hillmann immediately recognised the voice of his favourite pointer dog, whistled to him, and received a feeble yelp in answer. We hurried in the direction of the sound, and soon found the dog, apparently dying. Herr Hillmann examined the poor brute, and discovered crowds of enormous horse-leeches that were sucking the life out of him. The poor old boy had evidently been in a certain black pool hard by—probably in pursuit of a water-hen—and there been fastened on by these murderous creatures. It was a pitiful sight, for nothing could be done to save the poor animal, who died half an hour after. This incident threw a slight gloom over the rest

of the evening, and the supper was but a silent meal. But after supper my host proposed a walk to the fields, where the waggon-loaders were still at work bringing in the last loads of wheat, for on the morrow was the harvest-home, and not a sheaf must remain in the field, except what is left for the gleaners.

It was a pretty scene: the waggons, like the one that met me at the station, were each drawn by four beautiful horses, some were loaded to the top, that is about twelve feet high from the bottom, on which eminence some lads and women were riding home to the granaries to unload and store the corn, some being laden and some returning empty from the granaries for fresh loads. The women wore short black stuff petticoats, little short-waisted scarlet jackets with silver buttons, that hung loosely open over their white long-sleeved *shirts*, which went high up to the neck like those of the men, and with little scarlet caps, that covered nothing but the very backmost back of their back hair, of which they all have a profusion. The lads were in white linen trousers, shirt sleeves, red braces, and straw hats, ornamented by their sweethearts with gay ribbons and flowers—all whistling and working and singing merrily in the soft smile of the large approving harvest-moon. It was twelve o'clock before the last load had left the field, and all the men and women who did not find room on the top of it, shouldered their pitchforks and escorted it home with songs.

My bedroom was situated in a side-gable of the house, and although the furniture was homely, the room was delightfully clean and cozy. The two Gothic windows overlooked the flower-garden, and it being a sultry night, I left them open and enjoyed the full benefit of the fragrances arising from below, as well as the songs of the nightingales that lived in every bush and tree of the garden. It seemed to me as if I had scarcely gone to sleep, when at three o'clock I was wakened by a tremendous clattering noise, which I soon ascertained proceeded from the milk-pails of the dairymaids, going out into the pastures to milk the cows. Too tired to go out and witness this performance, I returned to my bed, and slept till half-past seven o'clock. On arriving in the hall below, I found a large assembly of the village peasants, dressed in their Sunday best, and when I entered the living-room, Herr and Frau Hillmann, after making kind inquiries in regard to my comforts during the night, informed me that I had just come down in time to witness the beginning of the ceremonies of the day. It appeared to be the custom that all the weddings of the village people were put off till the feast of the harvest-home—partly, I suppose, because the people had not the time before, and partly because the whole expense of the festivity was in this way transferred to the lord of the manor. The brides—we had three of them on this occasion—dress themselves in their best, consisting of a new black stuff shirt, a very short-waisted scarlet jacket fastened with silver buttons, and a white muslin kerchief pinned across the bosom, and then go up to the manor house, that the lady may put the finishing touch to their hair—generally insisting upon having it curled in front, a glory which they will undergo much agony to attain—and put on their *crowns!* These crowns had been prepared by Frau Hillmann, and consisted of a mysterious structure of the shape of a small beehive, built up with artificial flowers, natural green leaves, narrow ends of parti-coloured ribbons, and an abundance of tinsel. When this ornament had been placed on the head of the bride—which could not be done till after she had been shedding copious tears, none but herself knowing at what, and several times declared that her strength was forsaking her, and she must inevitably faint, unless supported by frequent doses of wine—she presented an object highly suggestive of an Indian squaw on a high festival.

When Frau Hillmann had performed her arduous duties towards the three brides, the whole assembly in the hall, amongst whom were the three bridegrooms, were fortified with beer (a kind of beer that was not at all like Bass's pale ale) and cake, after which four ladder-waggons, with four sacks each, and drawn by four horses, clattered up to the door to convey the party to church. The last of the waggons carried the musicians with their brass instruments, and when all had mounted into their seats, they drove off at a merry trot (how it must have hurt them on that pavement!), accompanied by the loud and blatant strains of the band in the rear.

During the absence of the bridal party, those who remained behind all assisted at the putting up and spreading of a long narrow table in the shade of the lime-trees, at which the whole village, as well as all the in and out-door servants of the farm, were to be regaled with a sumptuous repast, consisting of milk soups, large legs of roast veal, goose, two huge smoked hams, potatoes and broad beans, and a second course of rice boiled in milk, with stewed prunes—to be washed down with an unlimited supply of the above-mentioned home-brewed ale, and the contents of a small keg of home-distilled brandy for the men.

Punctually at twelve o'clock the waggons returned from church, and at the first sign of them the cooks dished up, so that at the same moment that the wedding party alighted, the dinner stood smoking on the table. As soon as the brides had shyly received the congratulations of the guests, every one took a seat and applied him—or herself—energetically and exclusively to the business of the hour. At one o'clock the dinner was over, and the whole crowd hurried to one of the barns, where a large space had been cleared and decorated with flowers to serve as a ball-room. The ball had to be opened by the lord of the manor, and in this wise: Herr Hillmann with the eldest of the brides, whose young husband had the honour of Frau Hillmann's hand for the same "Polonaise"—a kind of mazy march; I had

the second bride assigned to me, and her husband the housekeeper to him; whilst the third bride fell to the share of the coachman—a very great dignitary in the household — and her husband took the lady's-maid: had any lady visitors been staying in the house, or had there been any daughters in the family, they would have taken the places of the housekeeper and the lady's-maid. Herr Hillmann and I were released after we had danced with the three brides, but poor Frau Hillmann—who happened to be a rather stout lady—had to perform obligatory dances, not only with the three bridegrooms, but also with the coachman, the huntsman, and the miller! After their etiquette dances, the brides were allowed to divest themselves of their crowns, and then the dancing commenced in good earnest. Besides the dances of society, such as the Polka, the Galop, and the Polka-Mazurka, they performed a variety of national quadrilles, which were characterised by much stamping of feet and clapping of hands and frequent staccato yells of the men, and as the night wore onward the brandy-kegs gradually got emptier, every one introduced a "pas" and variations of his own into the dance. One couple especially received much applause from the rest of the company, who left off dancing in order to admire their performance. The dance was a Polka-Mazurka, and at a certain bar in the music the gentleman—one of the stable-boys—lifted his partner, a particularly delicate-looking, slender little dairymaid, clean off the floor and high above his head into the air, promptly setting her down again to go on in the dance in perfect time with the music—all this with the greatest ease of manner on both sides. After this feat I left the dancers to retire to rest—a rest that, until about four o'clock in the morning, was every now and then broken by the jolly shrieks of the men and the screams of women's laughter.

A DAY WITH HOLIBUT.

"The treasures of the ocean are greater than those of the land." This assertion applies, perhaps, with greater force and truthfulness to the Pacific than to the Atlantic Ocean. Its inexhaustible store, without any visible decrease, and with only a trifling expenditure of labour, supplies food, and even luxuries, to the numerous natives tenanting the islands that everywhere stud its vast expanse, as well as the coasts washed by its blue waters.

It cannot be the result of mere chance that human necessities, and the requisites to supply them, are so wonderfully and admirably balanced! Whales and seals, together with numerous oily inhabitants of the sea, obeying a wise and wonderful instinct, regularly visit the coasts and island homes of the savage, and thus bring a regular supply of heat-yielding matter. So deep-sea fish, solid, substantial, and muscular, in like manner, furnish material equally needed to build up the thew and sinew required by the native, to enable him to catch, subdue, and secure these leviathans of the deep.

Of all the deep-sea fish the holibut is by far the largest and strongest the savage has to grapple with. Holibut fishing, as practised by the Indians, in a canoe, on a dangerously rough sea, is a sport few have indulged in.

My story commences at Fort Rupert, a trading post of the Hudson's Bay Company, at the extreme end of Vancouver's Island; this so-called fort is a depôt for trading, or, in other words, bartering goods of various kinds for peltries (fur skins simply sun dried) brought for sale by Indian hunters to the fort. A large colony of Indians live close by, in a village composed of wood sheds, situated on a level plateau overlooking a bay, or, more correctly, a sheltered roadstead, named Beaver Harbour. A regular fleet of canoes are generally to be seen on the beach, of all sizes, from the war canoe, capable of carrying thirty fighting men, down to the shell, paddled by girls and boys. I was the guest of the chief trader, and having expressed a desire to witness holibut fishing, it was arranged that my wishes should be gratified, as soon as the requisite negotiations could be carried out with the chiefs. The morning of departure arrived, and as I left the fort, and strolled down the slanting beach towards the sea, a quaint assemblage of disagreeable specimens of humanity preceded me, in novel procession—savages of every age and size, from the stalwart chief to the waddling brat, all eyes and stomach.

A chief, particularly a white one, in savagedom is great or little in an exact ratio to the amount of pat-a-lech (a word equivalent to the bak-sheish of Easterns) he pays or gives for service rendered — being the trader's guest, and the presents being deemed highly satisfactory, of course the "Long Beard"—so they styled me—was on the topmost pinnacle of popularity.

A large canoe, manned by four savages, awaited my arrival, and this being a special occasion, they were more elaborately painted than is usual. A brief description of one will serve to portray the other three. Tailors are entirely unknown in the land of the red-skin. A small piece of blanket, or fur, tied round the waist, constitutes the court, evening, and morning costume of both chief and subject. My crew were *kilted* with pieces of scarlet blanket. Imagine, if you can, a dark, swarthy, copper-coloured figure leaning on a canoe paddle, his jet black hair hanging down nearly to the middle of his back, the front hair being clipped close in a straight line across the forehead. Neither beard, whisker, nor moustache ever adorns the face of the red-skin, the hair being tweezered out by squaws in early life, and thus destroyed. A line of vermilion extends from the centre of the forehead to the tip of the nose, and from this trunk line others radiate, over and under the eyes and across the cheeks. Between these red lines, white and blue streaks alternately fill the interstices. A similar pattern ornaments chest, arms, and back, the frescoing

being artistically arranged to give apparent width to the chest; the legs and feet being naked. A fine bag made from the skin of the medicine otter, elaborately decorated with beads, scarlet cloth, bells, and brass buttons, slung round the neck by a broad belt of wampum, completed the costume of my coxswain. The canoe was what is commonly called a dug-out, that is, made from a solid log of wood. The cedar (thuga gigantea) is always used by coast Indians for canoe-making. The process of hollowing out is long and tedious, but when complete the requisite bulge at the sides is accomplished by a very ingenious method. The canoe being filled with water, red hot stones are continually plunged into it until nearly boiling, then pieces of wood of various lengths are jammed athwart the canoe, and thus the sides are pressed out, and when cold retain the shape given to them. Nothing can be more graceful than the lines of the canoes used by the Fort Rupert Indians. Coiled round the sharp bow of the canoe like a huge snake was a strong line about sixty fathoms in length, made from the inner bark of the cypress, neatly twisted. Laying along each side, extending far beyond both bow and stern, were two light spear hafts about sixty feet long, whilst stowed away in the bow were a dozen shorter spears, one end being barbed, the other constructed to fit on to the longer spear, but so contrived that the spearman can readily detach it by a skilful jerk. Tied lightly to the centre of each of the smaller spears, was a bladder made from sealskin blown full of air, the line attaching it being about three fathoms in length.

I had hardly completed my investigation of the canoe, its crew and contents, when, to my intense astonishment, the four Indians who were to accompany me lifted me, as they would a bale of fur or a barrel of pork, and without a word deposited me in the bottom of the canoe, where I was enjoined to sit much in the same position enforced on a culprit in the parish stocks. I may mention, incidentally, that a canoe is not half as enjoyable as poets and novelists, who are prone to draw imaginary sketches, would lead the uninitiated to believe. It would be impossible to trust oneself in a more uncomfortable, dangerous, damp, disagreeable kind of boat—generally designated a "Fairy Barque"—that "rides, dances, glides, threads its silvery course, over seas, and lakes, or arrow-like shoots foaming rapids." All a miserable delusion and a myth. Getting in, unless lifted as I was bodily like baggage, is to any but an Indian a dangerous and difficult process; the least preponderance of weight to either side, and out you tumble into the water to a certainty. Again, lowering oneself into the bottom is quite as bad, if not worse, requiring extreme care to keep an even balance, and a flexibility of back and limb seldom possessed by any save tumblers and tight-rope dancers. Down safely, then, as I have said, you are compelled to sit in a most painful position, and the least attempt to alter it generally results in a sudden heeling over of the canoe, when you find yourself sitting in a foot of cold water.

We are off, and swiftly crossing Beaver Harbour, the beech grows indistinct in the distance; still the dusky forms of the Indians, the rough gaudily painted huts, the gleam of many lodge-fires, and wreaths of white smoke slowly ascending through the still air, the square substantial pickets shutting in the trade fort, its roof and chimneys just peeping above all, backed by the sombre green of the pine-trees, together presented a picture novel in all its details, wild and grand as a whole, such as Turner would have loved to paint.

A few minutes and we round the jutting headland, keeping close along the rocky shore of the island, glide past snug bays and cozey little land-locked harbours, the homes and haunts of countless wild-fowl; soon we leave the shore and stand away to sea. The breeze is fresher here, and a ripple that would be nothing in a boat, makes the flat-bottomed canoe what a sailor would call unpleasantly lively. Save a wetting from the spray and an occasional surge of water over the gunwale, all goes pleasantly. The far-away land is barely distinguishable in the grey haze. No canoes are to be seen in the dark blue water, the only sign of living things—a flock of sea-gulls waging war on a shoal of fish, the distant spouting of a whale, and the glossy backs of the black fish as they roll lazily through the ripple. The line at the bow is uncoiled, a heavy stone enclosed in a net is attached as a sinker, a large hook made of bone and hardwood, baited with a piece of the octopus, a species of cuttle-fish, is made fast to the long line by a piece of hemp cord; then comes the heavy plunge of the sinker, and the rattle of the line as it runs over the side of the canoe, and we wait in silence for the expected bite. While so waiting, it may be as well briefly to explain, for the benefit of such as are not familiar with fish, what a holibut is.

The holibut is a flat fish, belonging to the genus pleuronectidæ of naturalists; it attains a very large size in these seas, from three to five hundred-weight. Holibuts are common on the banks of Newfoundland, and are frequently taken by the cod-fishers; they are also found on the west coasts of Norway and Greenland, and it is stated are common around the coasts of Ireland and Cornwall. In 1828, a holibut, seven feet six inches in length, three feet six inches in breadth, and weighing three hundred and twenty pounds, was taken off the Isle of Man (Yarrell's B. F.). The holibut is a ground feeder; its favourite diet, small fish, crustaceans, and cuttle-fish. It spawns early in the summer.

A tug, that came unpleasantly near to upsetting us all, let us know that a holibut was bolting the tempting morsel, hook and all. A few minutes to give him time to fairly swallow it, and now a sudden twick buries the hook deeply in the fleshy throat, the huge flat fish finds to his cost that his dinner is likely to seriously disagree with him, whilst in the canoe all are in full employ. The bowman, kneeling, holds on

tightly with both hands to the line; the savage next him takes one of the long spears, and quickly places on to the end of it a shorter one, barbed and bladdered; the other two paddle warily. At first the hooked fish was sulky, and remained obstinately at the bottom, until continued jerks at the line ruffled his temper and excited his curiosity sufficiently to induce a sudden ascent to the surface—perhaps to have a peep at his persecutors. Awaiting his appearance stood the spearman, and when the canoe was sufficiently near, in he sent the spear, jerking the long haft or handle from the shorter barbed spear, which remained in the fish, the bladder floating like a life-buoy, marking the fish's whereabouts. The holibut, finding his reception anything but agreeable, tries to descend again into the lower regions, a performance now difficult to accomplish, as the bladder is a serious obstacle. Soon reappearing on the surface, another spear was sent into him, and so on, until he was compelled to remain floating. During all this time, the paddlers, aided by the line-man, followed all the twistings and windings of the fish, as a greyhound courses a doubling hare. For some time the contest was a very equal one, after the huge fish was buoyed and prevented from diving. On the one side the holibut made desperate efforts to escape by swimming, and on the other, the Indians keeping a tight line, made him tow the canoe. Evident signs of weariness at last began to exhibit themselves, his swimming became slower, and the attempts to escape more feeble and less frequent. Several times the canoe came close up to him, but a desperate struggle enabled him once more to get away. Again and again we were all but over; the fish literally flew through the water, sometimes towed the canoe nearly under, and at others spun it suddenly round, like a whipped top; nothing but the wonderful dexterity of the paddlers saving us from instant shipwreck and the certainty of drowning. I would have given much to have stood up; but no, if I only moved to one side to peep over, a sudden yell from the steersman, accompanied with a flourish of the braining club—mildly admonitory, no doubt, but vastly significant—ensured instant obedience. I forgot cold, wet, fright—indeed, everything but the one all-absorbing excitement attendant on this ocean chase; the skill and tact of uneducated man pitted against a huge sea monster of tenfold strength, a sight a lover of sport would travel any distance to witness.

Slowly and steadily the sturdy paddlers worked towards the shore, towing the fish, but keeping the canoe stern first, so as to be enabled to pay out line and follow him should he suddenly grow restive; in this way the Indians gradually coaxed the flat monster towards the beach, a weak powerless exhausted giant, outwitted, captured, and subdued, prevented from diving into his deep sea realms, by, to him, anything but life-buoys. We beached him at last, and he yielded his life to the knife and club of the red-skin.

Returning for another foray a like success attended our efforts, and three fish were thus taken during the day. Our three holibut weighed collectively over nine hundred pounds, the first taken being by far the largest. I arrived at this estimate by weighing portions of the fish at the Fort the following day. Some time was occupied on the beach in cutting them up and making temporary stages to pack the flesh away on, lest bears or wolves might demolish it ere a fleet of canoes could be sent after it on the following day. All these operations completed, a fire was lighted, and large masses of fish broiled on the glowing embers were summarily devoured by the hungry fishermen; the fish as an edible I did not care much about, but the sport I most thoroughly enjoyed. Perhaps the element of constant danger enhanced the charm of this, to me, new system of fishing. It was the first time I had alone, in a canoe manned by four savages, speaking an unknown language, upon the great trysting-ground of the illimitable sea, beheld the perfection of fishing, a pleasure considerably increased by the discovery that in a remote part of the world the sea—as it ever has been and still is in highly civilised countries—the nursery of the strong arm and defiant spirit. Men taught only lessons of dire necessity had hit on a plan, simple but most effective, that enabled them to master and land a large fish five hundred pounds in weight, to battle with a rough sea, in a boat so frail that a boy could easily upset it. I have tried cod fishing on the banks of Newfoundland, whale fishing on the coast of Greenland, sturgeon spearing on the Fraser, Lake fishing in Canada, salmon fishing in England and elsewhere, but not one single day can I recal to my remembrance, that equals in intense delight this red-letter day in the annals of my fishing experiences—my day among the holibut.

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HALF A MILLION OF MONEY.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "BARBARA'S HISTORY."

CHAPTER XLVII. A PAGE OF FAMILY HISTORY.

EVERY student of English history is familiar with the noble and ancient name of Holme-Pierrepoint. A more stately race of men and women than the bearers of that name never traversed the pages of mediæval chronicle. Their famous ancestor, Thierry de Pierrepoint, "came over," as the phrase is, with William the Bastard; but he was only the younger son of a younger son, and the houses which look back to him as their founder are, after all, but offshoots from that still more ancient line that held lands and titles in Franche Comté, three centuries before the great conquest.

How Thierry de Pierrepoint came to be lord of many a fair and fertile English manor; how his descendants multiplied and prospered, held high offices of state under more than thirty sovereigns, raised up for themselves great names in camp and council, and intermarried with the bravest and fairest of almost every noble family in the land, needs no recapitulation here. Enough that the Holme-Pierrepoints were an elder branch of the original Pierrepoint stock; and that Lady Castletowers, whose father was a Holme-Pierrepoint, and whose mother was a Talbot, had really some excuse for that inordinate pride of birth which underlaid every thought and act of her life as the ground-colour underlies all the tints of a painting.

The circumstances of her ladyship's parentage were these.

George Condé Holme-Pierrepoint, third Lord Holmes, of Holme Castle, Lancashire, being no longer young, and having, moreover, encumbered a slender estate with many mortgages, married at fifty years of age, to the infinite annoyance of his cousin and heir-presumptive, Captain Holme-Pierrepoint of Sowerby. The lady of Lord Holmes' choice was just half his age. She was known in Portsmouth and its neighbourhood as "the beautiful Miss Talbot;" she was the fifth of nine daughters in a family of fourteen children; and her father, the Honourable Charles Talbot, held the rank of Rear-Admiral in the Royal Navy. It is, perhaps, almost unnecessary to add that Miss Talbot had no fortune.

This marriage was celebrated some time in the summer of 1810; and in the month of October, 1811, after little more than one year of marriage, Lady Holmes died, leaving an infant daughter named Alethea Claude. Well-nigh broken-hearted, the widower shut himself up in Holme Castle, and led a life of profound seclusion. He received no visitors; he absented himself from his parliamentary duties, and he was rarely seen beyond his own park gates. Then fantastic stories began to be told of his temper and habits. It was said that he gave way to sudden and unprovoked paroxysms of rage; that he had equally strange fits of silence; that he abhorred the light of day, and sat habitually with closed shutters and lighted candles; that he occasionally did not go to bed for eight-and-forty hours at a time; and a hundred other tales, equally bizarre and improbable. At length, when the world had almost forgotten him, and his little girl was between four and five years of age, Lord Holmes astounded his neighbours, and more than astounded his heir, by marrying his daughter's governess.

How he came to take this step, whether he married the governess for her own sake, or for the child's sake, or to gratify a passing caprice, were facts known only to himself. That he did marry her, and that, having married her, he continued to live precisely the same eccentric, sullen life as before, was all that even his own servants could tell about the matter. The second Lady Holmes visited nowhere, and was visited by none. What she had been as Miss Holme-Pierrepoint's governess, she continued to be as Miss Holme-Pierrepoint's stepmother. She claimed no authority. She called her husband "my lord," stood in awe of her servants, and yielded to the child's imperious temper just as she had done at the first. The result was, that she remained a cypher in her own house, and was treated as a cypher. When, by-and-by, she also gave birth to a little daughter, there were no rejoicings; and when, some few years later, she died, and was laid beside her high-born predecessor, there were no lamentations. Had she brought an heir to the house, or had she filled her place in it more bravely, things, perchance, had gone differently. But the world is terribly apt to take people at their own valuation; and Lady Holmes, perplexed

"—— with the burden of an honour
Unto which she was not born,"

had rated herself according to the dictates of

one of the lowliest and most timid hearts that ever beat in a woman's breast.

Thus it was that Lord Holmes became the father of two daughters, and was twice a widower. And thus it was that Captain Holme-Pierrepoint of Sowerby escaped first Scylla and then Charybdis, and remained heir presumptive to his cousin's coronet after all.

No two girls ever grew up more unlike each other than the Honourable Miss Holme-Pierrepoints. There was a difference of nearly six years in their age to begin with; but this was as nothing when compared with the difference in their appearance, dispositions, and tastes.

The elder was tall, stately, and remarkable from very early girlhood for that singular resemblance to Marie Antoinette, which became so striking in her at a later period of life. The younger, on the contrary, was pretty rather than beautiful, painfully sensitive and shy, and as unpretending as might have been the lowliest peasant girl upon her father's lands. Alethea never forgot that she was noble on both sides; but Elizabeth seemed never to remember that she was noble on either. Alethea was cold and ambitious; but Elizabeth's nature was as clinging and tender as it was unselfish. Elizabeth looked up to Alethea as to the noblest and most perfect of God's creatures; but Alethea, who had never forgiven her father's second marriage, held her half-sister in that kind of modified estimation in which a jeweller might hold a clouded diamond, or a sportsman a half-bred retriever.

Years went by; and as the girls grew to womanhood their unlikeness became more and more apparent. In due time, the Honourable Miss Holme-Pierrepoint, being of an age to take her place in society, was presented at court by her aunt, the Countess of Glastonbury, and "brought out" after the sober fashion that prevailed in the days of George the Third. Before the close of that season she was engaged to Harold Wynneclyffe, fourth Earl of Castletowers, and early in the spring-time of the following year, while her young sister was yet in the schoolroom, the beautiful Alethea was married from her aunt's house in Somersetshire, where the ceremony was privately performed by the Bishop of Bath and Wells.

In the mean while, it was arranged that Lord Holmes' younger daughter was to be spared all those difficulties and dangers that beset a matrimonial choice. Her lot was cast for her. She was to marry Captain Holme-Pierrepoint of Sowerby.

A more simple and admirable scheme could not have been devised. Captain Holme-Pierrepoint was her father's heir, and it was of course desirable that Elizabeth's dowry should remain in the family. Then Elizabeth was very young, young even for her age, and her character needed to be judiciously formed. Captain Holme-Pierrepoint was the very man to form a young lady's character. He was a man who got through a great deal of solid reading in the year; who delighted in statistics; who talked pompously, was a strict disciplinarian, and had "views" on the subject of education. In addition to these qualifications, it may be added that Captain Holme-Pierrepoint was still handsome, and only forty-eight years of age.

Incredible as it may seem, however, Lord Holmes' second daughter was by no means so happy as she ought to have been in the contemplation of her destiny. Like most very young girls she had already dreamt dreams, and she could not bring herself to accept Captain Holme-Pierrepoint as the realisation of that ideal lover whom her imagination had delighted to picture. Her loving nature sorely needed something to cling to, something to live for, something to worship; but she knew that she could not possibly live for, or cling to, or worship Captain Holme-Pierrepoint. Above all, she shrank from the prospect of having her character formed according to his educational "views."

In order, therefore, to avoid this terrible contingency, the younger Miss Holme-Pierrepoint deliberately rejected her destiny, and ran away with her drawing-master.

It was a frightful blow to the pride of the whole Pierrepoint family. The Talbots and the Wynneclyffes were of opinion that Lord Holmes was simply reaping what he had sown, and that nothing better was to be expected from the daughter of a nursery governess; but Lord Holmes himself regarded the matter in a very different light. Harsh and eccentric as he was, this old man had really loved his younger child; but now his whole heart hardened towards her, and he swore that he would never see her, or speak to her, or forgive her while he lived. Then, having formally disinherited her, he desired that her name should be mentioned in his presence no more.

As for Lady Castletowers, her resentment was no less bitter. She, too, never saw or spoke to her half-sister again. She did not suffer, it is true, as her father had suffered. Her heart was not wrung like his—probably because she had less heart to be wrung; but her pride was even more deeply outraged. Neither of them made any effort to recal the fugitive. They merely blotted her name from their family records; burned, unread, the letters in which she implored their forgiveness, and behaved in all respects, not as though she were dead, but as though she had never existed.

In the mean while, Elizabeth Holme-Pierrepoint had fled to Italy with her husband. He was a very young man—a mere student—rich in hope, poor in pocket, and an enthusiast in all that concerned his art. But enthusiasm is as frequently the index of taste as the touchstone of talent, and Edgar Rivière, with all his exquisite feeling for form and colour, his worship of the antique, and his idolatry of Raffaelle, lacked the one great gift that makes poet and painter—he had no creative power. He was a correct draughtsman and a brilliant colourist; but, wanting "the vision and the faculty divine," wanted just all that divides elegant mediocrity

from genius. He believed in himself, however, and his wife believed in him; and for years he struggled on, painting ambitious pictures that never sold, and earning a scanty subsistence by copying the Raffaelles he so dearly loved. At last, however, the bitter truth forced itself upon him, and he knew that he had deceived himself with hopes destined never to be realised. But the discovery came too late. Long years of unrequited effort had impaired his health and bowed his spirit within him, and he had no spark left of that high courage which would once have armed him against all "the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune." He did not long survive the wreck of his ambition. He died in Florence, literally of a broken heart, some fifteen years after his romantic marriage with Elizabeth Holme-Pierrepoint, leaving her and one surviving child wholly unprovided for.

Such were the destinies of these half-sisters, and such the family history of which William Trefalden gave Saxon a meagre outline, after his consultation with Abel Keckwitch.

CHAPTER XLVIII. WHAT THEY SAID AT THE CLUB.

"And now, Saxon," said Mr. Trefalden, "I can tell you nothing beyond the fact that Edgar Rivière died in Florence some three or four years since; but I think we need have no difficulty in guessing the parentage and history of your distressed damsel. I imagine that her mother must have been left simply destitute; and in this case, Lady Castletowers would, of course, do something to keep her from starvation. I doubt, however, that her charity went beyond that point."

"But, good Heavens!" exclaimed Saxon, who was now pacing up and down the room in a fever of indignation, "this lady is her own sister, cousin William! her own sister!"

"Her half-sister; but even so, it is too bad."

"Too bad? Why, it's monstrous! If I were Castletowers"

"I do not suppose that Lord Castletowers has ever heard of the existence of these people," interrupted the lawyer.

"Then he ought to hear of it!"

"Not from your lips, young man. You have stumbled on a family secret, and, right or wrong, you are bound in honour to respect it. If Lady Castletowers keeps a skeleton in her private closet, it is not your place to produce that skeleton at the feast to which she invites you."

"I am afraid that's true," replied Saxon, "but I wish I might tell Castletowers, all the same."

"You must do nothing of the kind," said Mr. Trefalden, emphatically. "It is in your power to give great assistance to two unfortunate ladies, and with that privilege be content."

"I cannot be content to stand by and see injustice done," exclaimed Saxon. "They have been cruelly wronged."

"Even so, my dear fellow, you are not Don Quixote."

The young man bit his lip.

"Don Quixote's name," said he, "is too often taken in vain. Heaven forbid that we nineteenth-century people should come to apply it to the simple love of right! It seems to me that the world over here thinks a vast deal more of politeness than justice. It's not so in Switzerland. And now, cousin William, how am I to help them?"

"You must allow me time to consider," replied Mr. Trefalden. "It will require delicate management."

"I know it will."

"But I can think the matter over, and write to you about it to-morrow."

"The sooner the better," said Saxon.

"Of course—and with regard to money?"

"With regard to money, do the best you can for them. I don't care how much it is."

"Suppose I were to draw upon you for a hundred thousand pounds!" said the lawyer, with a smile.

"I'm not afraid of that; but I do fear that you may not use my purse freely enough."

"I will try, at all events," replied Mr. Trefalden; whereupon Saxon thanked him cordially, and put out his hand to say good-bye.

"You don't inquire how the company is going on," said the lawyer, detaining him.

"I am afraid I had forgotten all about the company," laughed Saxon. "But I suppose it's all right."

"Yes, we are making way," replied his cousin. "Capital pours in, and the shareholders have every confidence in the direction. Our surveyors are still going over the ground; and we are this week despatching a man of business to Sidon. Sidon, you may remember, will be our great Mediterranean depôt; and we mean to open offices, and establish an agent there, without delay."

"Indeed!" said Saxon. "Is it still so great a secret?"

"It is a greater secret than ever."

"Oh—good-bye."

"You are always in haste when business is the topic," said Mr. Trefalden. "Where are you going now?"

"To the club; and then back to Castletowers."

"You are making a long stay. What about the Colonnas?"

But Saxon was already half way down the stairs, and seemed not to hear the question.

He then went direct to the Erectheum, where he no sooner made his appearance than he found himself a centre of attraction. The younger men were eager for news of Italy, and, knowing whence he came, overwhelmed him with questions. What was Colonna doing? Was he likely to go out to Garibaldi? What were Garibaldi's intentions? Was Victor Emmanuel favourable to the Sicilian cause? Would the war be carried into Naples and Rome? And, if so, did Colonna think that the Emperor of the French would take arms for the Pope? Was it true that Vaughan was about to join the

army of liberation? Was it true that Lord Castletowers would command the English contingent? Was it true that Saxon had himself accepted a commission? And so on, till Saxon stopped his ears, and refused to hear another question.

"I am not in Signor Colonna's confidence," said he, "and I know nothing of his projects. But I do know that I have accepted no such commission, and I believe I may say the same for Castletowers."

"And Vaughan?" said Sir Charles Burgoyne.

"Vaughan *is* going. He starts for Genoa to-night."

"I felt sure that was true," observed Greatorex, with a significant laugh. "Perhaps the fair Olimpia has promised to take pity on him."

Saxon turned upon him as if he had been stung.

"What do you mean?" he said, hotly. "What should Miss Colonna have to do with the matter?"

"Perhaps a great deal," replied the banker. "The gentleman gives his arm to the cause, and the lady rewards him with her hand. 'Tis a fair exchange."

"And Vaughan has worshipped for years at the Olimpian shrine," added Sir Charles.

"Besides," said another, "what else does he go for? We all know that he doesn't care a straw for Italy. It may be a forlorn hope, you know."

"More likely than not, I should say," replied Burgoyne. "Olimpia Colonna is a clever woman, and knows her own market value. She'll fly at higher game than a major of dragoons."

Saxon's face was burning all this time with anger and mortification. At last he could keep silence no longer.

"All this may be true," he said. "I don't believe it's true; but at all events it is not in my power to contradict it. However, of one thing I am certain—that a crowded club-room is not the place in which a lady's name should be passed from mouth to mouth in this fashion."

"Your proposition is quite unexceptionable in a general way, my dear fellow," replied Burgoyne; "but in the present instance it does not apply. When a lady's name has figured for years in despatches, petitions, committee-lists, and reports of all kinds, civil and military, it can surely bear the atmosphere of a crowded club-room."

"I don't think that has anything to do with it," said Saxon, sturdily. "Despatches and petitions are public matters, and open to general discussion."

"But the probable marriage of a charming woman is a private matter, and therefore open to particular discussion," laughed the Guardsman. "For my part, I can only say that I mean to hang myself on Miss Colonna's wedding-day."

Then the conversation turned again to Garibaldi and Victor Emmanuel; and presently Saxon made his escape, and was on his way to the station.

He felt very moody and uncomfortable, as he leaned back in his Hansom and sped along the Strand. He had heard much that was infinitely disagreeable to him during the brief hour spent at his club; much that he could not refute, but which he had been obliged to endure with comparative patience. That Olimpia's name should be thus familiar to every idle lip seemed like a profanation; but that it should be coupled up with that of Vaughan and Castletowers, and perhaps—who could tell?—with the names of a hundred other men whose political sympathies necessarily brought them into communication with her, was sacrilege pur et simple.

What man on earth was worthy of her, to begin with? Certainly not Major Vaughan, with his surface morality, his half-concealed cynicism, and his iron-grey beard. Not even Castletowers, brave and honourable gentleman as he was. No—the only fit and appropriate husband for Olimpia Colonna would be some modern Du Guesclin or Bayard; some man of the old heroic type, whose soul would burn with a fire kindred to her own, who should do great deeds in the cause she loved, and lay his splendid laurels at her feet. But then lived there such a hero, young, handsome, daring, ardent, successful in love and mighty in battle, a man of men, sans peur et sans reproche?

Perhaps Saxon was secretly comforted by the conviction that only a preux chevalier would be worthy of Miss Colonna, and that the preux chevalier was certainly not forthcoming.

In the midst of these reflections, however, he found himself once more at the station, with the express on the point of starting, and not a second to lose. To fling down his shillings, dash along the platform, and spring into a first-class carriage, just as the guard was running along the line and the driver beginning his preliminary whistle, was the work of a moment. As the door closed behind him, and he dropped into the nearest corner, a friendly voice called him by name, and he found himself face to face with Miss Hatherton.

CHAPTER XLIX. ON THE PLATFORM.

"Well met by—well, not exactly by moonlight, Mr. Trefalden," said she, with that hearty, almost gentlemanly way of proffering her hand that always put Saxon so delightfully at his ease in her society. "Have you been shooting any more weathercocks, or winning any more races, since I saw you last?"

"No," replied Saxon, laughingly; "I have been more usefully employed."

"I rejoice to hear it. May I ask in what manner?"

"Oh, Miss Hatherton, if you want particulars, I'm lost! I'm only pleasantly conscious that I have been behaving well, and improving myself. I fear it's rather a vague statement to put forward, though."

"Terribly vague. At all events, you have not yet donned the red shirt?"

"The red shirt!" echoed Saxon, with an

involuntary glance at the little blue horseshoes besprinkling the bosom of that garment in which his person happened to be adorned.

"What do you mean?"

"I mean, that you have not gone over to Garibaldi."

Garibaldi again! It seemed as if the air was full of the names of Garibaldi and Italy to-day!

"What you, too, Miss Hatherton!" he said. "I have heard more about Italian affairs since I have been in town this morning, than I ever hear at Castletowers. The men at the Erectheum would talk of nothing else."

"I dare say not," replied the heiress. "The lookers-on have always more to say than the workers. But has not Miss Colonna enlisted you?"

"Indeed, no."

"You amaze me. I could not have believed that she would show such incredible forbearance towards a man of your inches. But perhaps you are intending to join in any case?"

"I have no intention, one way or the other," said Saxon; "but if any of our fellows were going, I should like to join them."

"There is nothing I should enjoy so much, if I were a man," said Miss Hatherton. "Do you know how the fund is getting on? I heard they were sorely in want of money the other day, and I sent them something—not much, but as much as I could spare."

"Oh, I believe the fund is getting on pretty well," replied Saxon, with some embarrassment.

"You are a subscriber, of course?"

"Yes—I have given something."

Miss Hatherton looked at him keenly.

"I should like to know what that something was," said she. "I heard a strange rumour to-day but I suppose you would not tell me if I were to ask you?"

Saxon laughed, and shook his head.

"A rumour is generally nothing but a polite name for a lie," replied he; "you should never believe in one."

"Perhaps not," said Miss Hatherton, gravely. "I should be sorry to believe all"

She checked herself, and added:

"If you do go to Italy, Mr. Trefalden, you must be sure to let me know. I only marvel that Miss Colonna's eloquence has not been brought to bear upon you long since."

"Well, I'm not an Italian."

Miss Hatherton smiled compassionately.

"My dear sir," said she, "if you were a Thug, and willing to make your *roomal* useful to the cause, the Colonnas would enlist you. Nation is nothing to them. All they want is a volunteer or a subscriber. Besides, plenty of your countrymen have gone over the Alps already."

"Are you sure of that?" asked Saxon, eagerly.

"As sure as that you never read the papers."

"You are quite right there," laughed he, "I never do."

"An English volunteer company is already formed," continued Miss Hatherton, "at Genoa."

"Yes—I know that."

"There will also, I hear, be a German corps; and both Swiss and Hungarian corps are talked about."

Saxon nearly bounded off his seat.

"A Swiss corps!" he shouted. "A Swiss corps, and nobody ever breathed a word of this to me!"

"It's very odd," said Miss Hatherton.

"And Miss Colonna was talking to me so much about Italy yesterday morning!"

"Perhaps they do not care to make a soldier of you, Mr. Trefalden," said the heiress.

"But they want soldiers!"

"True; but"

"But what?"

"Perhaps they stand more in need of the sinews of war just now, than of your individual muscles."

"The sinews of war!" stammered Saxon.

"You might get killed, you see."

"Of course I might get killed; but every volunteer risks that. Vaughan may get killed."

"He may; but then Major Vaughan has not ever so many millions of money."

Saxon looked blankly in Miss Hatherton's face.

"I—I really don't understand," said he.

"Do you wish me to explain my meaning?"

"Undoubtedly."

"There—excuse the illustration—it might not be politic to kill the goose that lays the golden eggs."

Saxon's face flamed with rage and mortification.

"Oh, Miss Hatherton!" he exclaimed, "how can you be so unjust and so uncharitable?"

Miss Hatherton smiled good temperedly.

"I am a plain speaker, Mr. Trefalden," said she, "and plain speakers must expect to be called uncharitable sometimes. You need not be angry with me because I speak the truth."

"But indeed you're mistaken. It's not the truth, nor anything like the truth."

"Nay," she replied, "I know the Colonnas better than you know them. Giulio Colonna is insatiable where Italy is concerned. I do not deny that he is personally disinterested. He would give the coat off his back to buy powder and shot for the cause; but he would strip the coat from his neighbour's back for the same purpose without scruple."

"But, indeed"

"But, indeed, Mr. Trefalden, you may believe me when I tell you that he would regard it as a sacred duty to fling every farthing of your fortune into this coming war, if he could get the handling of it. You will do well to beware of him."

"Then I am sure that Miss Colonna is not"

"Miss Colonna is utterly dominated by her own enthusiasm and her father's influence. You must beware of her, too."

"You will tell me to beware of yourself next, Miss Hatherton," said Saxon, petulantly.

"No, my dear sir, I shall do nothing of the

kind. I like you very much; but I neither want your money, nor Do you know what people are saying about you and Miss Colonna? By the way, is not this your station?"

"About me and Miss Colonna!" said Saxon, breathlessly.

"Yes—but this is certainly Sedgebrook. You must be quick, for they don't stop one moment."

"For Heaven's sake, Miss Hatherton, tell me first!"

"No, no—jump out, or you will be carried on. I'll tell you when you are safe outside."

Saxon jumped out, but clung to the window with both hands.

"Now!" said he. "Now!"

"Well," replied Miss Hatherton, speaking somewhat slowly, and looking him full in the face, "they say, Mr. Trefalden—they say you are going to squander your fortune on Italy; marry Olimpia Colonna; and break Lord Castletowers' heart."

But Saxon never heard the last five words at all. Before Miss Hatherton could bring her sentence to an end the shrill whistle drowned her voice, and the train began to move. The young man stood looking after it for some moments in blank bewilderment.

"Squander your fortune on Italy, and marry Olimpia Colonna!" he repeated to himself.

"Fly to Castletowers, sir?" said the solitary fly-driver of the place, recognising the Earl's visitor.

But Saxon preferred to walk; so he took the short cut through the fields, and strode on with Miss Hatherton's words still ringing in his ears.

"Marry Olimpia Colonna!" he said, for the twentieth time, as he sat down presently upon a stile, and proceeded unconsciously to cut off the heads of the nearest dandelions with his cane. "Marry Olimpia Colonna! Good God! there isn't a prince on this earth half good enough for her! As for me, I'm only just worthy to be one of her slaves. What a mad notion! What a mad, preposterous notion!"

Mad and preposterous as it was, however, he could think of nothing else; and every now and then, as he loitered on his way through the pleasant meadows, he repeated, half aloud, those wondrous words:

"Marry Olimpia Colonna!"

OUR COLONIES.

Dear old Mrs. Britannia has a family of forty-six children. Some members of the family are infantine; some are in lusty early manhood; while others are so matured in age, wealthy in pocket, and self-governed in general economy, that the tie that binds them to home is a very slight one.

Recently, for the first time, these forty-six children, her colonies, have sent in their accounts in such form that the mother country knows how each has thriven for fourteen consecutive years.

Collectively, these colonies and foreign possessions of Britannia cover an area of considerably more than four million square miles—equal to the whole of Europe, and a great deal to spare. India claims one of these millions, and Western Australia nearly another; and so they go down, down, down in size, to Gibraltar, which is a distinct and isolated British possession although not a colony, and barely covers two square miles. Several of the others are very small; such as St. Helena with its fifty square miles, Hong-Kong with thirty, Bermuda with twenty-four, and Gambia with twenty; but small as they are, each has its own governor.

Then, as to population, we make up not much less than thirty million souls in the British islands; and yet Britannia's possessions over the seas contain two hundred millions. India so overwhelmingly exceeds all the rest in this particular, that we must leave that out if we would compare the growth of the colonies proper, between the years 'fifty and 'sixty-three (the two years which begin and end the series). We then see that the North American colonies increased from two and a half to three and a half millions. But far more wonderful were the Australian colonies; they had less than half a million inhabitants collectively in the first of the two years; they had a million and a quarter in the second. When we consider that, exception made of the babies born on the spot, most of these seven or eight hundred thousand additional persons travelled ten thousand miles and more to get there, we cannot help regarding it as a really wonderful migration—not so wonderful as that of the Irish to America in regard to numbers, but more so in regard to the immense distance. The world presents few contrasts more remarkable than that between the density of population in two of these foreign possessions of our old mother. British India and Western Australia are not far from equal in size; yet the one contains as many inhabitants as two-thirds of the whole of Europe; while the other does not contain one quarter as many as Clerkenwell parish. In the one, the people are obliged to pack nearly two hundred to every square mile; in the other, every man, if the population were spread evenly, would stand alone in the middle of a region of sixty square miles.

The forty-six colonies have, nearly all of them, spent more than they have earned. They have not taxed themselves to the extent of their annual expenditure; and, as a consequence, they have had to borrow, at a much higher rate of interest, too, than the old country pays. India owed sixty millions sterling just before her troubles began in connexion with the mutiny; by the time they were well over, she owed one hundred millions—a token that mutinies are rather expensive proceedings. New South Wales boasts of six millions of debt, Victoria of eight, Canada of twelve millions. Big Western Australia, the most sleepy and stagnant of all our colonies, sets down her debt at precisely seventeen hundred and fifty pounds. Roundly speaking, nobody does anything in this last-named

place, nobody has any money, nobody buys or sells, nobody lends or borrows, nobody wants any workmen, and nobody could find them if he did; but everybody wants to go away, unless the government will continue to support the place as a penal settlement.

A great many ships of course visit the forty-six colonies in a year, mostly sent out from the home country. India doubled the tonnage of ships, entered and cleared, between 'fifty and 'sixty-three. So did Ceylon, and Mauritius, and New South Wales, and the North American colonies; but so did *not* the West Indies, which, somehow or other, have never recovered from the effects of negro emancipation. New Zealand much more than doubled this item; while Victoria took a giant stride, despatching and receiving seven times as many ships, or tons of shipping, at the end as at the beginning of this period of fourteen years. Only think of ten million tons of British shipping, irrespective of foreign and colonial, entering and leaving our colonies in a year, all of it having to make voyages from three to twelve thousand miles to get there!

Now what have these children bought from the old country during the fourteen years? How far have they spent their money or bartered their goods in a way to benefit *her?* Here the importance of the gold discoveries becomes very manifest. Four of the colonies, at any rate, have had nuggets and dust to give in exchange for bonnets, boots, Bass, buttons, brandy, and brad-awls; and they have shown a wonderful capacity for appropriating these and other commodities. India and Ceylon, not owing to any gold discoveries in those countries, but owing to the natural development of every kind of commerce, increased their import of British cargoes from eight millions to twenty millions sterling in three years. The North American colonies increased theirs from three to six millions. But look at the wonderful Australian group. New South Wales bought fourfold as much from us in 'sixty-three as in 'fifty, Victoria fourteen times as much. Only imagine that, in one single year, cargoes were shipped from the United Kingdom, to go eleven or twelve thousand miles over the ocean, and landed at some or other of the Australian ports, to the value of eighteen millions sterling; only imagine this, and we shall get some remote idea of the extent of the trade relations between England and those distant colonies. From the year when gold was discovered in Australia, English manufacturers derived almost as decided and sudden an advantage as if the precious metal had come to light in our own tiny island. All the implements for extracting and working the gold came from hence; and when the nuggets and dust were exchanged for coined sovereigns, these were readily and even lavishly exchanged for comforts and luxuries brought from the old country.

How strikingly the prosperity of the colonies tells upon the old country is shown as much by the negative results in the West Indies as by the positive results in Australia. In the former no gold has been discovered, no new industrial resources developed; the negro will not work hard, now that he is a freeman; the planters have not in them the dash and daring of English capitalists; they are frightened at what Cuba can do in competition with them; their sugar and rum and molasses do not bring them in so much as in bygone years; they have not much money to spend on English commodities; the condition of their islands is not such as to attract emigrants from the old country; and thus it happens that our dealings with the West Indies collectively are not advancing. We actually sent over less to Jamaica, Antigua, Dominica, St. Lucia, St. Vincent, Barbadoes, Grenada, and Tobago, in 'sixty-three than in 'fifty. There was one enormous exception to this stagnation; the Bahamas imported thirty or forty times as much as was her wont. But Bahama wanted very little of these good things for herself, and could not have paid for them if she had; the game of blockade-running was being played in 'sixty-three; and Bahama was a house of call for ships whose owners and crews were quite ready to make profit out of the troubles between Federals and Confederates.

Of course it follows naturally that the same circumstances which enable some of the colonies to import more largely than heretofore operate in augmenting their exports likewise. Victoria, for instance, which exported to the value of about a million sterling in eighteen hundred and fifty, rose to the magnificent figure of thirteen millions in 'sixty-three; and of this total more than seven millions were in gold, actual gold, either already refined, or in a more or less quartzose or granular state. The other colonies did not tell up so brilliantly; but still they showed what gold deposits can do: seeing that New South Wales raised her exports from two to seven millions, New Zealand from a mere drop to three millions, South Australia from half a million to two millions and a half. The Australian group altogether made up thirteen millions sterling of their exports in the shape of gold. This is a marvellous thing, certainly, in one year. And even British Columbia, in America, is beginning to tell upon the gold market in Europe.

Almost equal in commercial interest to the Gold question is that which relates to Cotton. Here have we been, for four years, hungering and thirsting for those delicate little white fibres; the planters of the United States were forbidden to send their cotton to us; and as four-fifths of our supply had for many years been obtained from them, the result was a veritable famine in this commodity. How nobly the Lancashire operatives bore their sufferings; how liberally the other classes of the country came to their assistance; how wildly the Liverpool merchants speculated on the rapidly-rising value of the small quantity of cotton—it is not here to tell. But it may fittingly be told how astonishingly the calamity

benefited such of our colonies as were able to grow this much-coveted substance. In eighteen hundred and fifty, three millions sterling was paid for all the cotton we obtained from the colonies, including India; whereas in 'sixty-three we paid six times as much to that one country alone. Nearly twenty millions sterling value of goods and silver (they do not want much gold currency in India) were sent out in exchange for (say) five hundred million pounds of cotton. India ought to have benefited greatly by this unexpected chance. There is too much reason to fear, however, that the actual cultivators, the ryots or peasant proprietors, obtained but a very small share of the enormously increased price for this cotton; it was filtered among a number of dealers and middlemen, and gave enormous profits to the native Bombay merchants—Messrs. Booboojee, Rumtumjee, Jamtoljee, Wacfoljee, and the rest of them. Let the reader remember that cotton used to be sold at a fair profit for twopence per pound at Bombay; let him calculate what price is denoted by twenty millions sterling for five hundred million pounds of cotton; and then he will see how much reason Bombay has had to rejoice at the shot which the Southerners fired on Fort Sumter. Provoking it is, certainly, to be told that in the West Indies, which used to send us a respectable quantity of cotton, the commercial arrangements of the planters, and the laziness of emancipated negroes, have caused the cultivation almost to die out. In our dire and sore distress, when we wanted cotton from anywhere, everywhere, the West India Islands sent us only driblets, telling little in the great account. In the Australian colonies labour is too high-priced to render the cotton culture profitable, except as a partial experiment; and somehow or other, most of the other colonies failed in coming to the rescue. Thus it happens that India is almost the only foreign possession of England which has responded to our cry for cotton during the late crisis.

Gold and Cotton—thirteen millions' worth of the one, twenty millions' worth of the other; these are the mighty items which the forty-six children sent to us in one year. But there were great doings in other commodities likewise. The Australian colonies sent us wool to the value of two millions in eighteen hundred and fifty; but so rapidly did their sheep grow, and so well were they attended to, that the export more than trebled by the year 'sixty-three; while that of hides and skins multiplied sevenfold. Go we to India; there we find that dyes, hides, skins, opium, jute, rice, saltpetre, seeds, silk, sugar, and wool, made up a magnificent total of twenty-five millions sterling—not all sent to us, certainly; for Pooh Pooh Whang Chop is the buyer of the chief item, opium. Go we to Ceylon; there we find coffee and cocoa-nut oil, the two chief items, rising nearly threefold in amount in the stated fourteen years. Go we to Canada, and the other North American colonies; there we find that the chief items sent to us are timber, dried fish, potash, corn, and flour,—treble as much in the last-named as in the first-named year. So completely fishy is Newfoundland, that all the chief articles of export smell of fish in some form or other. Look at the list:—two million cwts. of dry codfish, three hundred thousand seals (we beg pardon for calling a seal a fish, but he *will* paddle about in the water), three thousand tons of cod-oil (perhaps not all cod-liver), and four thousand tons of seal oil. Go we to the West Indies; there we find coffee, rum, sugar, molasses, and cocoa. The three principal islands send us a little over two millions' worth of these commodities; but this was not such an increase beyond the year 'fifty as ought to have been exhibited, or as would have been exhibited if those islands were well managed.

The reader will not be wearied by the above few round numbers. It really is interesting to see what are the chief articles which our forty-six children can sell to us, and how far they differ from each other in this matter.

Nor will it be a waste of time to see what sorts of things they are willing to buy from us in return. Clothing, and the materials for clothing, figure in a remarkable degree. Apparel and slops, millinery and haberdashery, hats and bonnets, boots and shoes, silks and woollens, linens and laces, the work of the needle and the spindle and the loom—what would the reader suppose our colonies took of these in sixty-three? Twenty-five millions sterling. It really is one of the most astonishing things in our commerce; for these are not merely the raw materials of industry; they are articles on which millions of fingers have been employed in the old country, millions of mouths fed or partially fed. Every throb of success or failure in India or Australia is sensibly felt by those who work upon textile goods in England. If we do not all form one family, more shame to us; for our colonies will buy of us as much and as rapidly as we of them. And then, if twenty-five millions are spent upon clothing, how much upon food and drink? About eighteen millions sterling. Not that it costs less to fill the belly than to clothe the back; but that the colonies can do more to grow their own food than to grow and make the materials for their clothing; and thus the money they spend to buy the former from other countries is relatively less. The colonials are either thirsty souls, or else they think English beer and ale paramount to all others; for they swallow these famous beverages to an astonishing extent. Mr. Bass, and Mr. Allsopp, and Burton-upon-Trent, would be great sufferers if India were suddenly swamped; she takes more than three million gallons of ale and beer from us yearly; most of it, we may be sure, in the form of pale ale. New South Wales swallows two million gallons; Victoria two million and a half; New Zealand a million; Queensland and South Australia half a million between them. Even supposing those colonists not to be able to make good malt or grow good hops, the freight of those articles from England would of course be very much less than that of

the beverages brewed from them; and we might suppose that the foaming tankards would reasonably be obtained in this way. But no; free trade allows ale and beer to flow hither and thither as it will; and the East Indians and Australians seem more willing to pay the market-price for Bass and Barclay than to turn brewers themselves. Clothing materials, food and drink, metals in various forms and stages of preparation—these are the three great classes of imports from the old country; and considering how weighty metals are, we may well be surprised that it should be worth while to send them so far and in such large quantities. Iron and steel, copper and brass, lead and tin, plates and sheets, bars and rods, castings and forgings, cutlery and tools, millwork and machines, manufactured goods—from tin-tacks up to steam-engines—three millions sterling worth of these went to India in 'sixty-three; and indeed all the forty-six children show that they understand the productions of Birmingham, Sheffield, Low Moor, and Wolverhampton, as well as those of Lancashire, Yorkshire, and Burton-upon-Trent.

BIRD-FANCIES.

Considering the really marvellous character of the instinct of migration in birds, and the curious circumstances which have been observed as resulting from it, it is not wonderful that strange conceits should have arisen among theorists.

In the Harleian Miscellany, a curious collection of documents printed from some of the manuscripts of that name, may be found (vol. ii. p. 583) a paper which, although it bears neither name nor date, appears to have been written about the middle of the last century, by a person of no less scientific pretensions than Dr. Charles Morton, at that time secretary to the Royal Society. It is stated to be the production of an eminent professor, for the use of his scholars, and now published at the earnest desire of some of them; so that his theory, wild and extravagant as it was, not only received the countenance of his scientific position, but found supporters ready to pin their faith to their professor's sleeve. The paper is entitled, An Inquiry into the Physical and Literal sense of that Scripture, Jeremiah viii. 7—"Yea, the stork in the heaven knoweth her appointed times; and the turtle and the crane and the swallow observe the time of their coming." The author commences by a critical examination of the passage, and discovers that the expression "the stork in the heaven," is proof that the bird had left the earth. He also calls attention to the phrase, "the time of their coming," remarking that it might more properly be rendered tempus itineris—the time of their journey. He then goes on to remind his readers that the birds had never been seen upon that journey, and hence deduces this marvellous result: "Therefore the stork (and the like may be said of other season-observing birds, till some place more fit can be assigned to them) does go unto, and remain in some one, of the celestial bodies; and that must be the moon, which is most likely, because nearest, and bearing the most relation to this our earth, as appears in the Copernican scheme; yet is the distance great enough to denominate the passage thither an itineration or journey." Very true.

However we may be disposed to look upon the theory, this last position may safely be granted, and even Hans Pfall, in Edgar Poe's ingenious story, who is the only person whose journey to that satellite we have distinctly traced, was supposed to have consumed nearly nineteen days in the transit, even by means of his swiftly-moving balloon. The astute professor, however, felt himself bound to meet certain objections and difficulties which occurred even to his aspiring mind. He presents them manfully before his disciples, and meets them boldly, if not scientifically. And, first, the distance—a serious matter, truly, but not such as to daunt him. The distance is undoubtedly formidable. It is calculated, however, that the extreme velocity of a bird's flight would accomplish it in two months; the travellers would spend three months in the moon, and two more months in their descent to this sublunary sphere; and then there would remain just five months which they could pass with us. Could anything be more neatly calculated, and does it not bear the impress of truth upon the very front of it? But an objector might be so bold as to remark that they would surely starve upon such a long journey or itineration. Why, no, observes the professor. For it is to be noticed that "at their departure they are very succulent and sanguine, and so may have their provision laid up for the voyage in their very bodies." Objector remembers that hibernating animals do thus consume their own fat, and the professor, perhaps, bearing in mind the same fact, goes on triumphantly, "besides, they would probably be asleep all the way, which spares provisions." Objector being so satisfactorily met by the theorist in that quarter, timidly ventures to imagine that the poor birds could never go on flying for two months at a stretch! Well, it does appear an extraordinary flight. But let us meet that difficulty by supposing that there are between this and the moon "many globules or ethereal islands," of which we can take no cognisance, but of which the birds might well avail themselves as so many landings in their long aërial staircase. Suddenly the objector remembers an insuperable obstacle, and triumphantly reminds the theorist that the moon revolves round the earth every twenty-eight days, and, fly as fast as they may, the birds would never catch it. Dolt! exclaims the professor, fairly losing his temper at the puerility of the objection; *do* you not perceive that if they set out at full moon, they will, after flying just two months, *arrive* also at full moon, when the satellite is just in the same position with regard to the earth as when they started? After this, objector falls into despair, and makes no further

attempt to shake the firmly settled fancy. The eminent professor has it all his own way, and his pupils earnestly desire that his extravagance, thus triumphantly vindicated, may be immortalised.

A theory, which is little less physically impossible than that of Dr. Morton, has long found acceptance with dispassionate and scientific observers, and even now is not so thoroughly exploded but that it exercises influence over the minds of some. The fancy is, that in winter, some birds, at all events the swallow tribe, retire to the bottoms of lakes and rivers, and pass the dead months in a torpid condition under water. Olaus Magnus was one of the earliest, if not the first to adopt this strange notion. He was followed by Etmüller, and afterwards by Derham, who quotes in confirmation of the theory a communication made to the Royal Society in 1712, "from Dr. Colas, a person very curious in these matters. He, speaking of their way of fishing in the northern parts, by breaking holes, and drawing their nets under the ice, saith, that he saw sixteen swallows so drawn out of the lake of Samrodt, and about thirty out of the king's great pond in Roseneilen; and that at Schlebittin, near an house of the Earl of Dohna, he saw two swallows, just come out of the waters, that could scarce stand, being very wet and weak, with their wings hanging on the ground; and that he hath observed the swallows to be often weak for some days after their appearance." The Swedish naturalist, Alexander Berger, in the Calendar of Flora, kept at Upsal, speaks of the swallow retiring under water as a matter of course, and to be expected at the proper season like any other every-day event. September 17th, he enters, "Hirundo submergitur." The swallow goes under water. It has been suggested, indeed, that the Upsal naturalist meant to write the leech (Hirudo) and not the swallow (Hirundo), in the entry in question, but we fear that this is the suggestion of some wag, for the evidence is too strong to be got over by a mere printer's error. That wise and good old naturalist, Gilbert White, half inclined to the same opinion, and when he was residing at Sunbury, on the banks of the Thames, he tells us that in autumn he could not help being much amused with the myriads of the swallow tribe which assemble in those parts. "But what struck me most," he adds, "was the fact that from the time they began to congregate, forsaking the chimneys and houses, they roosted every night in the osier-beds of the aits of the river. Now this resorting towards that element, at that season of the year, seems to give some countenance to the northern opinion (strange as it is) of their retiring under water." Even the illustrious Cuvier appears to have added the weight of his authority to the notion of submergence, for, speaking of the martin, he says: "That it becomes torpid during the winter, and even passes that season under water at the bottom of marshes, appears to be certain."

It is scarcely necessary to use many arguments to convince unbiased persons of the untenability of this fancy. It is true that certain animals hibernate; that is, remain in a state of torpidity during the cold weather. But they do so under peculiar circumstances, having first secured a warm and sheltered retreat in which their animal heat is economised, and which is within full reach of the effects of the returning sun of spring. If such an animal be disturbed during the cold weather, it may be prematurely revived by the approach of warmth, or if left exposed to the cold, it would infallibly die, without recovering from its torpid condition. The torpidity of hibernation, therefore, is a natural physiological condition dependent upon the diminution of temperature up to a certain point, beyond which it is fatal. Nor could such an animal revive in spring if its retreat were in such a situation that the gradually increasing heat of the sun in spring could not be felt. Now, it is an established fact, that all places situated at eighty feet below the surface of the earth are constantly of the same temperature. In these situations, therefore, the sun can have no influence, and nothing else could call forth dormant organs into action. The same cold which benumbed them would evidently perpetuate their slumbers.

But perhaps the best way to show the fallacy of such a fancy is to examine the statements of those who honestly believe that they have been eye-witnesses of the supposed fact; and such there are even now. It was only five or six years ago that a lady of respectable social position, living at Stockton-on-Tees, wrote to the Darlington and Stockton Times, asserting, that without any preconceived opinions concerning the submergence theory, she was herself a witness of the fact, and goes on to relate that she, and a person with her, saw a number of swallows dip under the water at Middleton, a village on the banks of the Tees, never rising from under it again. She watched them most closely for a great length of time, and was certain of the fact. Now, here we have a positive observation, made by an educated lady, who, however, confesses that "she is no adept in natural history," and nothing can convince her that she was in any way deceived, inasmuch as she not unnaturally prefers the testimony of her own senses to the dictum of closet naturalists.

Now, in examining into this statement, the first thing which strikes us is the positiveness of the observation. It is not easy to prove a negative. We may say that the thing is impossible. We may declare that no air-breathing animal could exist beneath an element so unfitted for its respiration as water. We may strengthen our argument by calling to mind the very active respiration of the class of birds, and their very exalted animal heat. We may dwell upon the necessary suddenness of the change from air to water. We may argue that no animals known to hibernate are believed to submerge themselves; and we may clench the matter by appealing to John Hunter's assertion,

that independent of any observation the submergence of birds in a living state was not a possible thing. Still, if any properly and duly authenticated case, which, when rigorously examined, proves to be out of the reach of fallacy, should occur, then by the laws of just evidence must theory fall like ice before the sun.

Let us, therefore, briefly examine the circumstantial account given by a credible witness, and corroborated by a second. Is it possible that it can be without foundation? Imperfect observation, arising from a want of special information upon the subject observed, has perpetuated many an error, and retarded many a truth. Let us only recal the circumstantial account of an eye-witness, given us by the good old Gerarde, in his Herbal, with regard to the origin of Barnacle geese: "But what our eyes have seene, and what our hands have touched, we shall declare." And after this solemn preamble, he goes on to tell how, in an island in Lancashire, are found cast up the trunks and bodies of old rotten trees, whereon is found a certain spume or froth, that in time breedeth unto certain shells, wherein is a lump which in time cometh to the shape and form of a bird, which, after it cometh to full maturity, falls into the sea, where it gathereth feathers and groweth to a fowl bigger than a mallard, and lesser than a goose! which the people of Lancashire call by no other name than *tree-goose*. And he ends his account by asseverating: "For the truth hereof, if any doubt, may it please them to repaire unto me, and I shall satisfie them by the testimonie of good witnesses." Great names might be brought forward in support of this portent even, for Saxo Grammaticus, Scaliger, Torquemada, Olaus Magnus, and others, no less than Gerarde, were profound believers in this tree origin of Barnacle geese, and in order that there may be no mistake, the Herbal contains a woodcut of the tree with the geese falling from it, and some of them already swimming about in safety beneath.

Returning now to the swallows, and bearing in mind that the fair disputant disclaims any special knowledge of natural history, let us hear her further. She next goes on to say triumphantly, "I can give you the exact day indeed; it was the 6th of September." Now, here she has proved too much in her anxiety to support the credit of her statement. In the Swedish Calendar of Alexander Berger, kept at Upsal, in latitude sixty degrees, it is not pretended that the swallow goes under water until September 17th. Why should English swallows take to their water-bed eleven days sooner than their brethren six and a half degrees further north? Indeed, it is well known to ornithologists that the swallow does not leave us until the beginning of October. Jenyns, from twelve years' observations, deduces a mean of October 14th—the earliest date being September 28th.

It is not difficult to offer an explanation of this and other stories of the kind which are prevalent among certain classes in this country, and which are widely spread and deeply rooted among the common people of Sweden. The University of Upsala has long offered large rewards for the discovery of submerged birds, but, notwithstanding the prevalent belief, they have never been claimed. That swallows dip in the water in their rapid flight is certain, and it is said, upon the authority of Mr. Couch, that they are capable of resting for a few seconds with outstretched wings upon the still surface of the water, and then flying off again. Let us suppose now that it is late on an autumnal afternoon; the shades of evening are gathering round, and the active birds are skimming the surface of a quiet pool or river, crossing and re-crossing, interweaving and intertwining in the mazes of their rapid flight. Under the most favourable circumstances, it is difficult to trace the course of any particular bird. But if dusk imperceptibly steals over such a scene, how easy would it be for an observer to imagine that the birds, when they dipped or rested themselves upon the water, really submerged themselves. It would be next to impossible to recognise these birds among the rest upon resuming their flight, while, as they retired by degrees to their roosting-places for the night, the gradual diminution of their numbers would most readily confirm the impression that those birds which were in reality only momentarily lost to view, had sunk beneath the protective bosom of the still, deceitful pool.

A modification of the submergence fancy, but which was an improvement upon it, inasmuch as it did not at once drown the birds, has for that reason received wider credence, as being more in analogy with recognised phenomena. This was the idea: that migrating birds, during their absence from us in winter, went into hiding after the fashion of hibernating quadrupeds. This fancy is at least as old as the days of Aristotle, who tells us that "many birds, and not a few, as some imagine, hide themselves in holes," and he enumerates the swallow, kite, thrush, starling, owl, crane, turtle, blackbird, and lark, as undoubtedly thus disposing of themselves. Pliny also infers that kites lie concealed in holes for some months. Nor has the doctrine of hibernation been without support from more modern naturalists. Schœffer, Hevelius, Derham, Ellis, Daines Barrington, Pennant, Gilbert White, and the Swedish naturalists, Kleni and Kalm, may be mentioned as all more or less in favour of their hiding rather than migrating. White, an excellent specimen of a philosophic observer, mentions that the sight, early in April, of some sand-martins playing in and out, and hanging before some nest-holes in a sand-hill, gave him great reason to suppose that they do not leave their wild haunts at all, but are secreted amidst the clefts and caverns of those abrupt cliffs where they usually spend their summers; for, since the previous weather of that year (1793) had been very severe, he thought it not very probable that they should have migrated so early from a tropical region, through all the cutting winds and pinching frosts. But, he adds,

"It is easy to suppose that they may, like bats and flies, have been awakened by the influence of the sun, amidst their secret haunts, where they have spent the uncomfortable foodless months in a torpid state, and the profoundest of slumbers." Still he speaks cautiously, for immediately after he remarks: "That they can retire to rest, and sleep away these uncomfortable periods, as bats do, is a matter rather to be suspected than proved." But the great Linnæus himself lent his countenance to this fancy, and it became in the last century a common mode of expression among those who were accustomed to derive their ideas from contemporary authorities. Thus Sturm, in his Reflections (April 28), says: "The mild air of spring awakens the swallow from his benumbed state."

It is worthy of remark, however, that, although numerous stories are recorded of torpid birds being turned up from their winter retreats, they are always, or nearly always, upon hearsay evidence, and doubtless have lost nothing in the transmission from one person to another. There is scarce an instance of a person describing such a circumstance from his own observation, unless, indeed, it were "a great many years ago, when he was a boy," and probably, therefore, incapable of judging of the evidence before him. White tells us two such tales—one of a clergyman of an inquisitive turn, who assured him that when he was a great boy, some workmen, in pulling down the battlements of a church tower early in spring, found two or three swifts among the rubbish, which were, at first appearance, dead, but, on being carried towards the fire, revived. And another "intelligent person" (every one is an intelligent person who has seen something that no one else has seen) stated that while he was a schoolboy at Brighton, a great fragment of the chalk cliff fell down one stormy winter on the beach, and that many people found swallows among the rubbish; but, adds White, "on my questioning him whether he saw any of those birds himself, to my no small disappointment he answered me in the negative, but that others assured him they did." Although, therefore, he leaned to the theory of hiding, he is forced to confess that he never heard any such account worth attending to. And with regard to the other soft-billed and short-winged birds of passage, against the possibility of whose migration there seemed to be many difficulties, he declares that, "as to their hiding, no man pretends to have found any of them in a torpid state in winter." He himself tested the truth of the theory by digging out the nest of the sand-martins from the holes in a bank, and satisfied himself that they were entirely deserted.

Markwick, a contemporary of White, and who was rather disposed to put faith in the hiding of birds in winter, very candidly reviews the circumstances which have led to that idea. In very early spring, and sometimes immediately after very cold, severe weather, on its growing a little warmer, a few swallows suddenly make their appearance long before the generality of them are seen. These appearances, he observes, certainly favour the opinion of their passing the winter in a torpid state, but do not absolutely prove the fact; for who ever saw them reviving of their own accord from their torpid state, without being first brought to the fire, and, as it were, forced into life again? Soon after which revivification they constantly die. This is, indeed, the key to any occasional cases of benumbed birds which may possibly have been found early in the season. Their condition is not a natural and physiological one, but an unnatural and dangerous one, produced by unwonted cold, from which the probability is they cannot recover.

The real state of the case is, that migrating birds are subject to certain evils arising from their instinct, which are of two kinds—one met with on their arrival in this country, another likely to be encountered at the time of their departure—one, that is, in early spring, the other in late autumn. We cannot in the present paper indicate the principle of migration at any length; but it will be sufficient to remark that the movements of birds being regulated by the seasons, and proximately by the heat of the sun, and both our climate and solar heat being proverbially uncertain and liable to variation, the delicate birds, which winter in a warm climate, return to this country only to encounter the unseasonable weather, cold, wet, and it may be frost and snow, which occasionally make their appearance even in April. To such inclement weather they soon succumb, and, retiring to their roosting-places, become benumbed and thrown into a helpless condition, which is only the precursor of their death; and in that condition they may have been sometimes found. Or it may even happen that they have arrived in March, or much earlier than the usual time, owing to an advanced season in the country they have left, when the results would be still more marked. Occasionally, the bad weather being transitory, they may be little seen for a few days after their first appearance, when, fine and mild weather returning, they recover themselves, and come out as usual.

With regard to the accidents of their autumnal migration, they are of a more limited character, and do not affect the species in the wholesale manner of those just alluded to. That it frequently happens that a bird has been seen long after its companions have quitted their summer residence, there can be no doubt. Such a circumstance, indeed, is one of those exceptional cases which prove the rule. Some defect of flight may have prevented it from accompanying the main body, recovering which, it would make the attempt to follow them, for the instinct is strong upon them at that season of the year; but we may safely conclude that such a bird, if it was forced to remain, would not be able either to subsist or to exist through the winter. The swallow produces two and even more broods during the season, the second brood being brought out about the middle or end of August. But if the second brood be retarded from any cause, or if a third brood be hatched late in the season, the impulse of mi-

gration will not be stayed by the other great impulse, usually so powerful, of love to their offspring; and such late broods are left behind if they are not matured enough to accompany their parents. In these cases, then, the young are pitilessly deserted, and, if very helpless, they necessarily and rapidly perish, and their putrid carcases or mouldering skeletons may be sometimes found on searching the nests in late autumn. If, on the other hand, they are more advanced, though not sufficiently so to undertake migration, they may subsist for some weeks, if the weather remain mild, for food is in sufficient abundance. But ultimately, if still unable to leave, they succumb, and fall into the torpidity, which is not, as has been imagined, their protection during winter, but only the first stage of their certain destruction.

MOTHERS.

Some one has said, that a young mother is the most beautiful thing in nature. Why qualify it? Why young? Are not all mothers beautiful? The sentimental outside beholder may prefer youth in the pretty picture; but I am inclined to think that sons and daughters, who are most intimately concerned in the matter, love and admire their mothers most when they are old. How suggestive of something holy and venerable it is when a person talks of his "dear old mother." Away with your mincing "mammas," and "mam-mas" suggestive only of a fine lady, who deputes her duties to a nurse, a drawing-room maternal parent, who is afraid to handle her offspring for fear of spoiling her fine new gown. Give me the homely mother, the arms of whose love are all embracing, who is beautiful always, whether old or young, whether arrayed in satin, or modestly habited in bombazine. Though I have lately glorified aunts somewhat at the expense of mothers, I am not insensible to the supreme claims which the latter have upon our love, our gratitude, and our respect. There are more ways than one of looking at things: and there are many aspects of mothers which are entirely beautiful.

Maternal love is a mystery which human reason can never fathom. It is altogether above reason; it is a holy passion, in which all others are absorbed and lost. It is a sacred flame on the altar of the heart, which is never quenched. That it does not require reason to feed it and keep it alive is witnessed in the instinctive maternal love which pervades all animal nature. Every one must have instinctively felt the aptness of the scriptural illustration of maternal solicitude, which likens a great love to a hen, which gathers her chickens under her wing. The hen's maternal care, so patient, so unselfish, is a miniature replica of Nature's greatest work. No doubt, it is carried on and on ad infinitum, until we want a microscope to see it. There are myriads of anxious mothers in a leaf, whose destiny is to live for a single day and then die for ever; as there are millions of anxious mothers in the human family whose span of life is threescore years and ten, with a glorious eternity lying beyond. The mother is the mainspring of all nature, the fountain of all pure love—the first likeness on earth of God himself. Man did not deserve to have the first entry into the garden of Eden. Burns, with his great sympathetic soul, seems to have felt this when he sang of Dame Nature,

> Her 'prentice han'
> She tried on man,
> And then she made the lasses, O!

It was the only way of explaining the matter while adhering to the Mosaic history. If I were a follower of Dr. Colenso, and ventured to interpret these things in my own way, I should say that if the writer of that history had been a woman, she would have brought Eve on the scene first and devoted a rib to Adam; and if I were a Frenchman, I should say, that it was not polite of Adam to take the *pas* of a lady. But I am neither, and I will say none of these things, for I am

> Orthodox, orthodox,
> Wha cam' in wi' John Knox,

and I will not sound an alarm to my conscience with any "heretic blast," whether it come from the "west" or the south. I will not even say that

> What is nae sense maun be nonsense.

The theory that we derive our intellectual qualities from our mothers, while we are indebted to our fathers only for our physical attributes, is most agreeable to all the natural instincts of man. It is so rational a theory that one wonders why those clever old fellows the "ancients" did not perceive it. It is upon this theory that we trace the genius of our great men to the influence of their mothers. The same theory, taken inversely, would also account for the fact that great men very rarely have great sons. Genius is not hereditary through the fathers, but through the mothers. The popular perception of this law of nature finds expression in the common remark that a child is "the image of his father," and has the "amiable disposition of his mother," or perhaps vice versâ as to the disposition.

It is not altogether because our mothers are of the "gentler" sex that we fly to them for sympathy instead of to our fathers. It is because there is a more intimate relationship between us, because the strings of our nature are more in unison; because we are more nearly flesh of their flesh, and blood of their blood. In the old patriarchal times the father was the principal person, the sole and undivided head of the family. The mother was a secondary person altogether. One cannot help feeling that the mothers of the Old Testament occupied a somewhat undignified position in the family. The state of affairs in patriarchal society is fully explained when we call to mind that the head of the family was generally a "sad Turk."

It is a fact, which may not be generally known, that a remnant of the patriarchal system still lingers in the midst of the new dispensation which inculcates love and equality. And the country (of all countries in the world) where this autocratic paternal government is to be met with is Scotland. In the Catholic countries of Europe, the love and duty of children centre in the mother. In Spain, Italy, and Germany, and particularly in France, the mother is the guiding star of the family. The German mother is a sacred idea; the French mother is a poetical one. When a Frenchman gets sentimental, he never fails to rave about his mother. When he goes into battle, he invokes the name of "ma mère." When he lies dying on the field, his last words are for "ma mère." When he escapes this fate and returns to France, victorious, his first desire is to embrace "ma mère." When he gets tipsy—which, to his credit, is seldom—he maunders about "ma mère." Toujours ma mère! The German is not so high-flown on the subject, but possibly he is more in earnest in his affection. When you meet him abroad in the world, he has always pleasant recollections of his "moder" to impart to you. How rarely you hear him talk about his "fader!"

As you come north, however, among Celts, Saxons, and Scandinavians, the father rises in importance and the mother sinks. I cannot believe that race is the sole cause of this difference in feeling; for while in Scotland you find the father pre-eminent in the affections of the children, in Ireland it is the mother who attracts the largest share of attachment. In England the mother is of less importance than in France, less even than in Ireland. This may be explained partly by the difference in religion, partly by the laws of succession and primogeniture. In the Catholic religion, the material idea is quite as sacred as the paternal one, while it has the additional attributes of humanity imparted to it. The Virgin Mary, with the Saviour of the World at her breast, is the ever present symbol of maternal origin and maternal love. In Protestant England this is wanting to the great mass of the people; and the aristocracy, who set the fashion even in social habits, inculcate the idea of inheritance from the father, naturally inviting duty, if not love, towards the male head of the family. In English aristocratic society it matters little—so far as name and property are concerned—who your mother is. She may be a washerwoman or a dancing-girl. You, the eldest son, are as much a Duke and a Montmorency as if your mother had been a scion of the noblest house in the land. It is your father from whom you get all your glory and all your possessions. Such is the subordination of the sons of the aristocratic classes to the paternal idea, that they will even take their politics from their fathers, against their own convictions. In a purely domestic way, however, the English mother occupies a most honourable position. She is loved, respected, and looked up to, and the usages of society, no less than the dictates of natural reverence, establish her claim to the most delicate and chivalrous consideration. In one department of the household she is all supreme.

This is not quite the case in Scotland. The Scotch father is sternly patriarchal. The wife is in a great measure subordinate to him even in domestic matters. In England and Ireland, and indeed in most other Christian countries, the children take their religion and their piety from their mothers; in Scotland they take them from their fathers. This is chiefly to be observed among the middle and lower classes. You will find many Scotch households in the rural districts, where the father is a sort of potentate in his house. He has the best room, the best chair, the best knife and fork, *the* silver spoon. The tit-bits and the luxuries are reserved for him. His wife speaks of him with awe and reverence, and calls him "Mister," even to her own relations. When this majestic father expresses his views, his wife sits mum, never daring to put in a word. If he be given to religion, he will have his way in that; if he be given to whisky-toddy, he will have his way in that also. He will decide the doctrine of predestination, and equally determine for himself how many tumblers are good for him after dinner. Education, I fancy, is at the bottom of this Scotch singularity. The men are better educated than the women. Intellectually they are not companions for each other. The result of this state of things is, that the children "take to" the father rather than to the mother. You will rarely see a Scotch boy kissing his mother; yet it is common to see him caressing his father. I believe that, if a Scotch father and mother were to come out from their home to seek fortune elsewhere, and one were to turn to the right and the other to the left, the children would, in most cases, follow the father. In Ireland and France, I believe they would follow the mother. In England, probably some would follow the father and some the mother. But the influence in each case would be different. Yet in all Christian countries the primary idea of a mother is one that instinctively associates itself with love and tenderness and sympathy. However important the father may make himself, there are matters which he cannot assist us in. We may consult him on the affairs of life and the world, but it is to the mother that we go for advice, sympathy, and consolation in the affairs of the heart and the sensibilities. It is on her bosom that we pillow the weary head, into her ear that we pour the tale of our soul's woe, from her lips that we hear the sweet spoken words of comfort and consolation.

And how little can we return to her for all her patience with us, all her care, all her love for us. When we are young unfledged birds in the nest, we cling close to her, taking her warm breast and her protecting wings as our birthright—as yet unconscious of our debt of gratitude. And when our feathers grow, we fly away and leave her—fly away to build nests of our

own. We pass from one care to another, never sharing it, but always the objects of it.

When we consider what the life of a mother is from first to last, we should learn to be grateful, and strive to show our gratitude. It seems almost a hard doctrine that a man should leave his mother and cleave to his wife. As a matter of social polity, it may be necessary that he should do so; but in purity and sacredness, no love can exceed that which a man feels for his mother. No other love should be allowed to interfere with this. It is the love of Heaven itself.

When we reflect upon what mothers have to endure, we may allow that novelists are right in making the culminating point of happiness the marriage of their heroines. After that their trouble begins. Man, in his self-importance, has applied the proverb to himself; but it should be, "When a *woman* marries her trouble begins." It is she who feels the needles and pins of life. Man it is, rather, who sharpens their points. Woman's is a subjective life from first to last. No man knows what a woman suffers in bearing and bringing up a family of children. Only Heaven knows—Heaven which has endowed her with that wondrous love which redeems her existence from being an intolerable slavery. And when the task is done, and the children have gone forth into the world, how hard it is to be left alone with a full heart—with love still warm and sympathy still unexhausted. Ah me! ah me! my heart bleeds when I think of the widowed mother wafting her loving thoughts across the seas upon the wings of sighs, nursing us again in thought, fondling us once more in the arms of her imagination. This is the mother's fate often; the father's seldom. The father, when he becomes a widower, is never too old to begin his life all over again. The mother, in most cases, holds the old love too sacred to pollute it with another. She is content to live upon the memories of the past—to wait patiently until God calls her to that land, where the love of the mother is known, though there is neither marrying nor giving in marriage.

CHINESE THOUGHTS.

Next to Confucius stands Mencius, in the estimation of the Chinese. Like Confucius, he was a great traveller, and visited many of the states adjacent to and dependent upon China. He was generally accompanied by his disciples. Remusat says that his style, though less concise and elevated than that of "the prince of letters," is equally noble, and more adorned and elegant. His conversations have more variety than is to be found in the apophthegms and maxims of Confucius—who is always grave and sometimes austere. He raises virtue into ideal regions, and repulses vice with cold indignation. Mencius, with an equal love of virtue, speaks of vice with more of scorn than of horror; he reasons with it, even seeks to make it ridiculous. He has a sort of a Socratic irony. He ventures to utter the boldest and bitterest truths to princes and grandees who sought his laudation. He exhibits nothing of Oriental servility. He is rather Diogenes than Aristippus, but with more of sagacity and decorum; he is always inspired by zeal for the public good. Extracts from his writings are to be found in the second volume of the Mélanges Asiatiques, and some of them will serve to illustrate his merits, and at the same time the highest reach of wisdom in the thoughts of the Chinese.

"If you will have robes of silk, you must plant the mulberry-tree." A Chinese proverb prettily says, "A splendid garment is in the leaf of the mulberry." Mencius thus reproved a prince: "What avails it that your kitchen overflows with food, and that your stables are filled with fat horses, if your people are pale with hunger, and their famished corpses cover your fields?"

"As water subdues fire, the humane principle subdues the non-humane. But if a man threw without effect a cup of water to extinguish chariots filled with burning wood, can he say, 'Water will not subdue fire?' The humane must not bring feebleness to the rescue of those who suffer. Humanity must, therefore, not be weak, but energetic."

"Gold is heavier than feathers. Is a cartload of feathers, therefore, weightier than a button of gold?"

Mencius thus describes the habits of his day: "In the spring-time the emperor visits the labourers who prepare the soil, and assists those who are in want. In autumn he visits the harvesters who gather in the fruits, and aids those who have not a sufficiency."

"When the emperor entered the boundaries of his (vassal) princes, if he found the land free from weeds, if the fields were well cultivated, if the old were provided for from the public revenues, if the sages were honoured, if the most distinguished were called to public employments, he rewarded the prince by an extension of his domains.

"But if he found none of these things, he punished the (vassal) princes. If they failed to pay their visit of homage, and to produce their accounts and tribute, he lowered them one degree in dignity; if they failed twice, he diminished the extent of their territory; if thrice, he sent six military bodies, who removed them from their government.

"The federal compact was proclaimed by the highest of the vassal princes, in the presence of the rest. The victim was tied to the sacrificial altar; the book containing the compact was placed upon the victim. These were the decrees:

"1. Let the children who are wanting in filial piety be put to death. Deprive not the legitimate son of his inheritance to give it to another. Make not a wife of your concubine.

"2. Honour the sages. Give recompenses to the men of talent and genius. Bring forward virtuous men.

"3. Respect the aged. Cherish little children. Be hospitable to guests and travellers.

"4. Let the *Literati* have no hereditary charges or magistracies. Let not different (inconsistent) functions be imposed upon the same person. In selecting public officers, let merit alone determine your choice. Let not the administrators of cities be put to death by your arbitrary authority.

"5. Let there be no dirt-heaps in your fields (i.e. waste no manure). Prevent not the sale (transfer) of the fruits of the earth (free trade). Confer no principality without imperial authority.

"After the compact, the principal vassal prince said, 'You who with me have bound yourselves by this treaty, sanctioned by all, carry each with you sentiments of concord and harmony.'"

"Seek and you will find; neglect anything, you will lose everything; but we must seek what is to be found within (our grasp), for we shall not find what we seek if we seek what is beyond (our reach)."

"If your lessons are listened to, preserve your serenity; if they are not listened to, preserve your serenity, for if you know your truthfulness, why should you not be serene?"

"The (intellectual) nature of the superior man is fixed and immutable, not augmented by a wide sphere of action, not diminished by poverty and nakedness."

"If with five acres you cultivate the mulberry-tree, if your women raise silkworms, your old men may be clad in silken garments; with five fowls and two sons, and watching the seasons, your old men will have food. One labouring man will suffice for eight mouths."

"He who looks upon the ocean thinks little of streams and rivers. He who has passed the portal of the saints (who has been instructed by the sages), will not value highly the teachings of ordinary men."

"Yang thinks only of himself; he would not pull a hair out of his head for the public good.

"Sué loves everybody; he would bend his head to the dust if by so doing he could render any benefit to the emperor."

Mencius quotes with high praise the "man of eminent virtue," the Emperor Yaou, who said to his brother, "Go, comfort ye the people, gather them around you; correct them, assist them, teach them to be prosperous, encourage them by their own impulses to return to goodness. Shower upon them many benefits."

It was of Yaou that Confucius said, "What is so great as Heaven? Who but Yaou ever resembled its greatness?"

"Sages have been known to change the manners of barbarians, but a sage was never converted to barbarism by barbarians."

"To dwell habitually in the great domicile of humanity, to sit constantly in the becoming seat (i.e. to be observant of the appropriate ceremonies), to walk in the broad pathway (i.e. to obey the great moral rules), to spread among the people the harvests of your own good fortune, and if good fortune fail you, to confer all the benefits at your disposal, to be incorruptible by riches, impassible under poverty and humiliation, to show no fear in the presence of danger and of an armed force, this is to be a great man."

The prime minister of the kingdom of Sung consulted Mencius, and told him that being convinced of the oppressive character of a tax that bore heavily upon the people, he thought he should diminish it, and at the end of the year abolish it altogether. Mencius answered, "There was a man who was accustomed to steal every day the poultry of his neighbours, and was reproached for his dishonesty. 'Well,' he answered, 'I will amend little by little. I will only steal one fowl a month for a year to come, and then I will abstain altogether.' No," said Mencius, "no, when you know that what you do is unjust, cease at once to do it. Why wait a year?"

"Men talk idly about empire, nation, family. The foundation of the empire is in the nation, of the nation in the family, of the family in the individual; in fine, government is founded on the people, the people on the family, the family on its chief."

"Win a people and the empire is won; win their hearts and their affections, and you win the people; you win their hearts by meeting their wishes, by providing for their wants, and imposing upon them nothing that they detest."

"As the fish hurries away from the otter to the protection of the deep waters, as the little bird flies to the thick forest from the hawk, so do subjects fly from wicked kings."

"You cannot reason with the passionate, you cannot act with the feeble or the capricious."

"Sure and sincere truth is heaven's pathway; to meditate on truth in order to practise it is to discover the pathway and the duty of man."

"No man who has been consistently true and sincere has failed to win the confidence and favour of other men. No man in whom truth and sincerity have been wanting has ever long possessed their confidence and favour."

"The good man needs not impose on himself the obligation of truthful words (truth being natural to him), he needs no special resolution (in a particular case), for equity and justice are his habitual guides."

"The benevolent man loves mankind; the courteous man respects them. He who loves men will be loved by them; he who respects men will be respected by them."

"If I am treated rudely, let me examine into the cause, and if I cannot discover any sort of impropriety in my own conduct, I may disregard the rudeness, and consider him who displays it as no better than a brute, and why should the conduct of a brute disturb me?"

When Mencius was asked his opinion as to the conduct of two individuals, one of whom had fled, and the other had remained at home when their house was attacked by robbers, and the person who had taken flight was severely condemned by the questioner, Mencius went into all the circumstances of the two cases, and declared that each had been influenced by the same prudential considerations, and that each would have acted as the other did had their positions been changed.

Mencius relates what follows, and it is characteristic of the manners and customs of his time.

"There was a man of Tsi who had a legitimate wife and a concubine, who dwelt together in his house.

"Whenever the husband went out he returned gorged with wine and food, and when his wife inquired where he had been eating and drinking, he answered, 'With the rich and the noble.'

"The wife said to the concubine, 'Whenever my husband goes out he returns satiated with wine and food. If I ask him with whom he eats and drinks, he answers, "With the rich and the noble." Now, never has one illustrious person visited our abode. I will secretly learn where he goes.'

"So she rose early, and followed her husband to the places he visited. He passed through the locality, but not a soul saluted or spoke to him. Reaching the western suburb among the tombs was one who devoured the remains of the ancestral sacrifices, but without being satisfied. He went to other places and did the same, and thus he habitually gratified his appetite.

"His lawful wife returned home, and said to the concubine, 'We placed our future hopes in our husband, and lo, what are we doing?' She told the concubine what she had seen, and they wept together in the women's apartment (over the profligacy of the man). He returned—not knowing what had taken place—with a gay countenance, boasting of his good fortune to the wife and the concubine.

"Such are the means," says the sage, "by which many pursue wealth and honour, profits and advancement. How few those are who blush and moan for this misconduct!"

"Who by a tortuous example has ever made men straightforward and sincere? Who by dishonouring himself can render others honourable? Holy men do not necessarily resemble one another; some seek solitude and retirement; others exhibit themselves, and approach the neighbourhood of authority; some are exiled, others remain at home. The object of all perfect men is to be pure, free from stains, and this alone."

Mencius thus describes a good public functionary: "Lien did not blush to serve a worthless prince, nor disdain a petty magistracy. But in the exercise of his functions he drew forth sages from their obscurity, and himself walked in the straight path. If he was disesteemed or neglected he felt no resentment; even when suffering from want and misery he neither complained nor was afflicted. If he dwelt in a village he was always satisfied, had a serene look, and sought no other abode. His language was, 'You are you, and I am I' (i.e. we all pursue our own purposes). 'You approach me with naked arms, your bodies unclad (it is unbecoming), but to me it is no defilement.' The reproof thus conveyed has given courage to the pusillanimous, and the cold and insensible have become earnest and affectionate."

He gave the following description of one of the ancient governments of China (Khi):

"The people were taxed to the amount of one-ninth of their earnings, the public functionaries were regularly paid, the frontiers were well guarded, but no (import) duties were levied. There was no interference with the fisheries in the lakes and ponds, criminals were not punished in the presence of their wives and children. Widowers, widows, and those who had lost their parents, were under the special charge of the state." And he quotes the verse from the Book of Odes:

> Riches and power are blessings but to those
> Who soothe the widow's and the orphan's woes.

Upon which the king exclaimed, "What admirable words!" And the sage replied, "O king! if you find them admirable, why do you not practise them?"

"Some labour with their intellect, some with their hands. Those who labour with their intellect govern men, those who labour with their hands are governed by men. Those who are governed by men produce the food of man, and those who govern men have their food produced by men."

"Not by superiority of age or honour, not by the virtues and power of your brother, is friendship to be secured. Friendship must be allied with virtue. Virtue is its only bond.

"The virtuous literate of a village spontaneously links himself in friendship with the (other) virtuous literates of that village; the virtuous literate of a kingdom allies himself spontaneously with the virtuous literates of that kingdom, the virtuous literate of an empire with the virtuous literates of that empire. But this is not enough; he must mount higher; he must study the works of the ancient sages, recite their verses, read and explain their books, and he must make himself acquainted with these sages to accomplish this. He must examine the era in which they lived (to learn what they accomplished). It is by ascending ever higher that the noblest friendships are accomplished."

When the King of Tsi consulted Mencius as to the mutual duties of princes and ministers, he replied:

"If the prince commit great faults, the minister should remonstrate. If he repeat them, if he turn a deaf ear to these representations, the minister should replace him, and deprive him of his power."

The king changed colour when he heard these words, and Mencius added: "The king must not deem my words extraordinary. If the king interrogate his subject, his subject dares say nothing which is opposed to right and truth."

Once he said to the prince: "If a man were commanded to carry off a great mountain and fling it into the sea, he might well answer, 'I cannot do this;' but if he were told to tear away the branch of a young tree, and replied, 'I cannot,' he would exhibit indisposition, but not impotence. Now a monarch who governs amiss should not compare himself to the man who is expected to throw the big mountain into the ocean, but to one who refuses to pluck the branch from the tree."

Again he told his sovereign: "There was little substantial glory in splendid repasts or in costly robes, in crowds of vassals, or in military renown; but in good government, in the choice of virtuous ministers, in the encouragement of the labourers in the field, and the artisan in the workshop, in the courtesies to foreign guests, in the pure administration of justice, in the education of the people, and in the strengthening of all the social and domestic relations."

Again he said: "The love of music is becoming, of the chase is blameless, but he is the best ruler who enables his people to participate in his pleasures. If the prince rejoice in the joys of his people, the people will rejoice in his joy. If he be saddened with their sadness, they will be sad when he is sad; and if he rejoice with everybody, everybody will rejoice with him."

In a conversation with Mencius, Kaou-tze said: "The nature of man resembles running water, turn it towards the east it runs towards the east, turn it towards the west it runs towards the west. Man's nature does not distinguish good from evil, any more than the water distinguishes the east from the west."

Mencius: "True! the water does not distinguish the east from the west, but can it not distinguish height from depth? Man's nature is naturally good, as the water runs naturally downward. There is no man who is not naturally good, as there is no water that does not naturally descend.

"But if you stop the course of the water you may make it mount above your forehead. Place obstacles in its way, it will flow back to its source, nay, you may carry it over a mountain. But is this the nature of the waters? No! it is constraint.

"And so men may be constrained to evil, this their nature permits.

"Man's natural tendency is towards good. Our nature is good. If we commit vicious acts, it is not because the faculty (of doing good) is wanting. All men have the feelings of mercy and pity, all the sense of shame and hatred of vice. All have the sentiments of deference and respect, all the sense of praise and blame.

"The sentiment of mercy and pity is humanity, that of shame and hatred of vice is equity, that of deference and respect is urbanity, that of approbation and blame is wisdom. Humanity, equity, urbanity, and wisdom are not of outward growth, they are in us and from within us, though we do not think of this."

"If," says Mencius, "in abundant years good actions predominate, if in sterile years evil actions, it is not that man's nature is different, but that passion has attacked and submerged the heart and led it away to evil."

"The passions which cause man to abandon the noble sentiments of the heart are like the axe and the scythe, which cut down the beautiful vegetation of the mountain."

"Princes have their precious possessions, their territory, their people, and a good administration. Those who consider pearls and precious stones as their treasures will be overtaken by calamity."

"All men have the sense of commiseration. To extend it to all pain and suffering is humanity. All men have the sentiment of what is not right to be done. To extend this to all they do is equity."

"Simple words of sound sense are the best."

"Men abandon their own fields to remove tares from the fields of other men."

"When pulse and corn are as plentiful as fire and water, what should prevent the people from being virtuous?"

"While you listen to a man's words, watch the movement of his eyes, and you will penetrate his disguises."

"Being without blame, he went forth to be executed."*

"Diffuse knowledge, interchange employments, so that the deficiencies of some may be filled up by the superfluities of others."

"Sacrifice not in an unclean vessel."

"A beggar will not value what is trampled on."

"The courage of the impetuous is far less virtuous than the courage of the thoughtful."

* Self-sacrifice for the benefit of one's family or country, is held in China to be a merit of the highest order. In cases where substitution is allowed, there is no difficulty in finding an innocent man to be executed, who sells himself for about a hundred ounces of silver (30*l.* to 40*l.*), and so provides for his widow and family. I knew of a case in which a distinguished literary graduate wrote a petition to the emperor representing the grievances of his people, who were in a state of insurrection. The grievances were acknowledged and redressed, but their eloquent exponent delivered himself over to the Mandarins to be dealt with as the authorities should deem fit. The nails were torn from his fingers as a punishment for having written the petition, and he was ordered for execution, and was decapitated. A temple was built in his honour, a pension was awarded by the people to his family, and everybody seemed satisfied that everything right and proper was done on the occasion.

"All men have in them the sentiments of compassion and sympathy. In a crowd that should see a child falling into a well, there would not be one who would not feel fear and pity."

"Nothing is nobler than to afford to others the means of exercising their virtues."

"Markets were established to enable men to exchange what they possessed for what they did not possess. He was a worthless man who first levied taxes upon this interchange."

HOBBY-HORSES.

Is there any one among us who does not keep a hobby-horse?—to whom the pleasure of parading a favourite toy, material or intellectual, is unknown? If there is I should like to see the man, as a curiosity not equalled even by a living specimen of the dodo, or a yearling ichthyosaurus making its first clumsy essays towards amphibious perfection. But I do not believe in him, and will not allow that a being absolutely hobby-horseless exists; that there lives the man or woman whose days pass away without the indulgence of a toy, or the dandling of a doll. No, we may be sure that, whether we confess it or deny it, we all have our particular beast at home, our dapple or our roan, our black, our chesnut, our mouse-colour, or our bay, capering somewhere about the establishment, though we all choose different keeping-places, and have idiosyncrasies in the matter of airing-grounds. Some of us, for instance, keep our hobby-horse under lock and key, in the closet opposite to that wherein the family skeleton lives, taking him out to air occasionally—privately and surreptitiously as it were—and under close disguise, so that he may pass for a dog or a sheep, perhaps for a wolf or a lion; for something useful and to be encouraged, or for something dangerous and to be put down; but in no wise to be discovered as a hobby-horse with two false legs and a ewe neck stuffed artistically, good only as a plaything and pastime. Others, on the contrary, have him in the court-yard, caracolling about the premises without the least attempt at concealment; the first thing seen by a stranger, the last by a guest; the whole domain given up to hobby-horsemanship, and the whole world his pasture-ground. And others again show him warily to private friends; just the tip of his nose snuffing the morning air, or the end of his tail whisking off the flies from his housings; but honestly, if warily, confessing him for what he is, and not masking him in pasteboard vizors sheepish or leonine, and making believe that his entertainment means sacrifice or crusade for the world at large. This kind air him in home-paddocks well defended, with only a chosen few to see the fun, and cry bravo! at the proper moment. Too honest to deny that their hobby is just a hobby and nothing more, they yet are sensitive as to the ridicule the poor beast may get; and so they keep him to close quarters and private airing-grounds, and put plenty of water into his soup. But whether close or open, confessed or denied, walled paddocks or public thoroughfares, we all do keep a hobby-horse if not horses, and all do feel supreme delight when we get inside the trappings, and display our horsemanship to friends and not impartial judges.

One of the most charming bits of hobby-horsemanship on record was that of my Uncle Toby and Corporal Trim, when they besieged forts and cities in the back garden, and fought out extinct battles, with different issues, on the tablecloth. They were of the class which keeps its hobby-horses undisguised, and is not ashamed of its stable—is indeed rather proud of it than otherwise, and gently solicitous for all friends to witness the dexterity of its manège, and the ease with which it can take flying leaps and clear all manner of five-barred gates. The world would be somewhat the gainer if all hobby-horses were of the same innocency of complexion as that of my Uncle Toby and Corporal Trim, and if nothing more vicious or aggressive ever stood on its hind legs and made snaps at the passers-by.

Louis the Sixteenth of France—luckless Louis!—had his hobby-horse stalled in a blacksmith's shop, and was never so happy as when filing at locks and keys, and dabbling his royal fingers in sweet-oil and blacklead; while Danton and Robespierre, Marat and Saint-Just, were sketching out their grim hobby in garrets and court-yards, in a short time to hammer him out of the wood and iron of the guillotine, cemented with the tears and blood of the best in France. Charles the Fifth of Spain had his swinging to innumerable pendulums—trying to make timepieces synchronous, with the distracting results usually allotted to the would-be regulators of circumstance and the meddlers with undiscovered laws. And all through history we find the footprints of various hobbies which the great ones of the earth bestrode and made to dance upon high places. Sometimes they were of rather fiercer aspect and rougher manners than was quite agreeable to the beholders; as Nero's for one example; Procrustes' for another; Gessler's hobby done up in an old hat for a third; the Duke d'Alva, bestriding one cut out of the same block as Charles the Fifth's but with different garniture and bloodier pasturage, trying to make souls uniform instead of timepieces synchronous, for a fourth; while Catherine de Médicis, the Marchioness de Brinvilliers, the Borgias, and the Thugs, are a quartet taken at random from among the thick-coming memories of hobby-horses historical. Our own "farmer George" had one of a peaceful and bucolic order; which is more than can be said of the hobbies owned by Carlyle's favourite Fritz and Fritz's papa, by that slovenly old witch-finder King James, by Tippoo Sahib, or, in later days, by the Nana. But the Eastern hobbies generally are of the tigerish order; though it is not for us to cast stones at our neighbour's stable windows, when our own reveal such ugly brutes

tied up by the head and tail to the steps of the imperial throne.

Many are the hobby-horses of men—passing away from history and going now into private pastures to note what toys and playthings are attached to domestic and personal establishments. One man has the hobby-horse of fishing. He will sit on a rock the whole day through, getting sunburnt and blistered, throwing a minnow at the end of a line into the water and watching the rare bobbing underneath of a float, or whipping a stream with an artificial fly, and getting a wet jacket for the pleasure of a handful of trout weighing an ounce and a fraction each. Another man wears out his strength and his buckskins in the saddle, and thinks life not worth having without a fox scouring across the country and a pack of hounds in full cry after him. A third hangs his hobby-horse about with old masters, with which the first requisite is faith and the desideratum a picture-cleaner. He has a Rembrandt as black as soot and utterly impossible to decipher, which he values next thing to his life, but about which Wardour-street could tell some queer tales if it chose; he has a Jordaens loaded with fleshy fruit not half so good as Lance's, and dotted about with flowers as fleshy as the fruit which Miss Mutrie would be ashamed to own; yet his Jordaens comes only second to his Rembrandt, though a trifle more authentic. Then he has an ugly bit of ugly life by Jan Steen, also unapproachable; and an olive-green landscape by Berghem, for which in his estimation a king's crown would not be too much to pay; all of which pieces of canvas make the garniture of his hobby, whereof he cannot be sufficiently proud or appreciative. This was dear old Savage Landor's hobby; as was the possession of rare books and Spanish manuscripts that of Southey. Another man has his hobby of pictures certainly, but pictures of all ages and both kinds—modern and ancient—"my collection, sir," as if his copies of La Cenci and La Seggiola, and his originals by Brown and Smith, represented the last results of civilisation and the extremest point of human knowledge. However, these are innocent hobbies, if a little wearisome to us the spectators by the monotony of their caperings.

Another man drives his hobby into the fields and hedges and makes it browse on ferns and wild flowers — botany in the concrete; parading his Wardian case, or his hortus siccus, or his open-air fernery with the latest varieties which need a magnifying-glass to see how they are varieties at all, or his newly discovered species of stinging-nettle, as the finest and most beautiful of the hobbies cherished by man—as, indeed, the only hobby worth dandling, and almost the only object in life worth living for. Another has his stuck all about with butterflies' wings and beetles' backs; another clothes his with feathers; another with horns; another with skins of foreign beasts; and a few devote theirs to the raising of monster rhubarb or magnificent cabbages—to roses as big as peonies, and to strawberries as fat as plums.

Any of these are better than the hobby of grand friends which afflicts certain people—the "my lord" and "my lady," and "the eminent Mr. This," and "the celebrated Mrs: That," whose names are hung like bells round the collar of the hobby, making a fine jingling and a tinkling in the ears of the grosser multitude. This is not at all an uncommon hobby, but one of which it is no ill nature to say, that the sooner it is cut up into firewood whenever found capering and braying, the better for all rational individuals within earshot and eyeshot. Moral philosophy makes also a hobby of formidable dimensions, and with a collar of jangling bells heralding its approach, of graver tones and heavier metal than those which tell the world that we are snobs and patronised by swells. So does physiology; so does phrenology; so do, indeed, all the 'ologies when used as hobbies and not as carriers—as playthings wherewith to amuse a vacant hour, and not as cart-horses for ploughing up the stiff loam and preparing good ground for the reception of fertile seed. Perhaps of these phrenology, as a hobby, is the biggest bore of all, and the most irritating; exciting in one an ardent desire to knock the rider down—the organ of combativeness being, as a rule, pretty well developed behind most Anglo-Saxon ears, and its manner of action lawfully demonstrable to men riding their phrenological hobby over one's own skull. One of the greatest bores I know, or ever wish to see, is a man who is always astride a phrenological hobby, and to whom the most subtle and complex workings of character are so many cut and dried manifestations of organs with no more mystery about them and no more wonder, than that a thread jerked across a loom should present itself in the result as so much cloth, with or without pattern according to the cards. It may be so; but to those who are not phrenologists this exposition of the genesis of character is but a cold study and a comfortless side-blow of Fate.

Their health is a grand hobby with some people; or rather their belief in their diseased and unhealthy condition, and their proximity to and fitness for "the bourne whence," &c. I know certain people, who, if they were suddenly translated to a state of health so robust and vigorous that even they themselves could not possibly bemoan their afflicted state, would have positively nothing to do, nothing to talk of, and not the ghost of a hobby to ride. These hobby-riders are terrible companions, even to doctors accustomed to the hospital and the "theatre;" but to the uninitiated, who speak of symptoms and ailments with a lowered voice and the undefinable accent belonging to a forbidden subject, they are appalling; habit inducing a familiarity with painful subjects (revolting would be a better term), from which we who are exempt shrink in dismay. And the funny part of the matter is, that the more horrible the disease, and the more distressing the symptoms, the prouder they are of their hobby; the higher the capers they make him cut, and the louder his neighings and his brayings: distinction, in

fact, being the foremost passion of the human mind, so that when we cannot be distinguished for wit, beauty, wealth, or renown, we grasp even at the pitiful decoration of monstrous disease—that being better than the dead level of an undistinguishable likeness with the vulgar crowd.

Another hobby of a kind akin is our own woeful sorrow. Heaven help us! we have all of us material enough to make that hobby from mane to tail, if we have a mind, though we may not all desire such public riding as what some of us delight in. The black housings of death, the tattered ones of poverty, the tear-laden of disappointment, the flame-coloured of domestic strife, the crushed and crumpled of oppression and injustice,—who is without one or other, and some with all at once, and more to the back of them—shut up in the closet with the skeleton, and able to be made into the trappings for a hobby at a moment's notice, if so willing? Women are, for the most part, the riders of this hobby—men not often breaking down the home fence to show off the family skeleton in the court-yard, pranked out as a hobby, and ridden about the roads for the whole outside world to see. But women, to whom concealment is a thing abhorrent from Fatima's time and before, build up a hobby out of the dry bones; and when they do so, they are second in unpleasantness only to those who dandle their diseases like pet dolls, and drag you through a pathological museum every time you spend half an hour in their company. For sorrows make up the pathology of the soul; and suffering is a disease, whether of the mind or the body.

Another hobby capers about with a pill-box at the saddle-bow and black draughts in the holsters, where the pistols of fighting men should be. Fortunately for mankind, many of this sort (also generally women) have of late years taken to Hahnemann and infinitesimals, so that they are not likely to do the amount of grave mischief common in the days when men and women were prescribed for like horses, and little children underwent the treatment which would now be considered too severe for a Life Guardsman. Else, if not homœopathic, they are great patrons of patented medicines, and have always some wonderful salve or pill on hand, able to heal all sores and to cure all disorders. This is a useful hobby enough if held with a tight rein and given but scanty housings; also if pastured among the poor, to whom a doctor's bill would be destruction, and self-management worse destruction still; else, if suffered to go caracolling about unchecked, and with a generous profusion of silver trappings, it is one of the runaway nuisances of the hobby genus to be caught hold of and tethered in the pound the soonest and most rigorous possible.

Akin to this, in a far away sense, is that provoking creation which goes about the world putting things to rights. Some people think that they have a mission to set their neighbours' houses straight; that they were born to sweep souls clean with their own moral brooms; and that whatever they think to be good and wise—what special Numbo Jumbo they vow to be Apollo and Jove in one, is so absolutely, let who will hold opinions diverging. These are the people who, while hotly combating for truth and its righteous absolutism, change their creed twenty times in their lives, yet who are passionate and perhaps intolerant proselytisers for each and all in turn, learning nothing by experience, and learning self-diffidence least of all; yet so passionate and so intolerant that they will denounce the wilful blindness of even their own former disciples, who have remained faithful to the special hobby to whose tail they were the means of attaching them. These are the people who take up every superstition and every delusion as it appears, and who always go beyond their master, out-Heroding Herod, more Lutheran than Luther, and Calvinistic beyond Calvin; they form the pabulum on which each new craze feeds, and change their hobbies as often as new delusions arise. But they keep faithful to one—their hobby in chief, and the bell-wether of the rest—namely, reforming and converting every miserable individual for ill luck fallen within their sphere; attempting to clothe all in the special livery adopted at the moment, and signing them to the creed which is to be the regeneration of the world. They are a well-meaning set, these hobby-riders; but truth, if not politeness, compels me to assign them to the region of illimitable bores; and were I compelled to make a choice—from which the kind fates defend me!—I would rather accept the quack medicines than the quack faiths, and would prefer to swallow strange pills by the hundred than new faiths by the score. The riders of the hobby ticketed Moral Physic, have had a fine field in that Salt Lake city we have all heard something about; also in certain other cities nearer home, where the banner of new lights has been unfurled for crazy fools to gather under its folds.

A hobby-horse made after the pattern of a will-o'-the-wisp, jumping here and there and everywhere, capering up and down over every kind of pasture, even over places usually held sacred, and sometimes running down hill with the bit between his teeth masterless, is the hobby-horse of the punster. I know a man with whom the habit is so inveterate, the hobby so domesticated, that he would pun at the funeral of his own mother, and find occasions for flashes of wit on the most sorrowful event of his or any other person's life. It is not that he is heartless—on the contrary, he is a warm-hearted, genial fellow—but that he has ridden his hobby for so long he cannot dismount now; hobbies having a certain power of adhesion when one has been long inside the housings. It is an irritating kind of hobby, and plagues one as much as the buzzing of a fly, or the shrill piping of a gnat, or anything else that is restless, purposeless, and intrusive. For the punning hobby is never still. Go where you will, or do what you will—chant psalms, sob threnodies, make

battle speeches or love-songs, whatever the work in hand—grave, earnest, tender, mournful, no matter what—the punning hobby thrusts his snub nose into your face and neighs out a jingle that scatters all your threads of thought or snatches of song like broken cobwebs to the wind. Yet on occasions this is a merry hobby enough, and one to be patted and fed with sweet food liberally; and when ridden by such men as Sydney Smith, Ingoldsby, Hood, Hook, or Jerrold, is worth a golden field for pasturage. But in general it is a hobby with impertinent proclivities, and to be ridden warily, and with a rein well gathered up in hand.

Politics is a graver-visaged hobby and often ends in a game at thumps more vigorous than pleasant—a hobby to be a little afraid of, and not ride openly in an enemy's camp, nor aggressively anywhere. Of late days we have had many such of ferocious aspect enough; and even now there are caracollings in drawing-rooms, with the irrepressible negro holding one bridle-rein, and the representatives of state rights the other, which make a stir and a pother little suited to the ordinary character of those localities. Criticism too is much ridden by certain men, who expect that all the world shall bow its thousand necks for their hobby to caper over at its pleasure, and who carve the wooden legs into sceptres, which every human mind must recognise and obey. The riders of the critical hobby count among the bores of society, being generally gifted with a loud voice, a dictatorial manner, a profound acquaintance with unpleasant adjectives, and a self-complacency which if it have a beginning, has assuredly no end.

Then come a crowd of smaller hobbies, such as the hobby of dreaming dreams and telling them; the hobby of collecting old china—Japanese, Wedgwood, old Chelsea, Dresden, Gris de Flandre, or what not; the hobby of turning the house into the bad likeness of an old curiosity shop, which be sure you call bric à brac; the hobby of my family—my daughter's beauty, or my son's talent, the fine match that Emily Jane has made, and the one still finer that Mary Anne is about to make—the hobby, in short, of all our own grey geese being swans superlatively white; the hobby of good dinner-giving; the hobby of expensive party-giving; the hobby of fine dressing, and that of the newest fashions. The running after preachers and preachments, and the belief that salvation is to be secured by taking sittings in a certain church, is also a hobby much bestridden by many, but one of a grave and sober manner of being; to read all the magazines the instant they appear, and to have the first cut of a new novel before any one else has seen it, and before it has even been reviewed, is a hobby. A hobby is lion hunting, both of the social and feral sort; though just now I am thinking of the social kind, and of all the pitiful shifts to which the hunters are put in spreading their nets and stalking out their runs. To be seen at certain grandee houses is again a hobby not unknown to the dwellers in the nineteenth century; and to be able to stick cards of invitation and visiting cards, coroneted, on one's chimney-piece is a hobby the softness of whose sleek velvet muzzle few are Spartan enough to withstand. In fact, society is peopled and overrun with hobbies; but we are not always honest enough to confess that what we are riding is a hobby only—a stuffed thing made of wood, and for the most part useless and without meaning; which we, however, do our best to persuade our neighbours is a real and undeniable charger, bearing us to battle or to the plough-field, as our pretence is heroism or usefulness. Hobbies! hobbies, my friend! almost all things well bestridden; but why not confess the parentage and acknowledge the plaything honestly, without pretence and without disguise?

SPANISH POLITICAL TYPES.

One reason why so little interest has been directed towards Spanish affairs by the political information sent from Spain, has been the ignorance of what section of public opinion was meant by the terms Moderado, Neo-Catholic, &c. As we have been favoured by Darnagas with a definition of these and other terms, this ignorance need exist no longer. To begin:

The Liberal de Corazon is a citizen with a severe expression of countenance. His hair is rough and straggling, and covers a large skull; he shaves all the hair off his face, with the exception of his moustaches. His eyes are sombre. His neck moves freely in the unstarched, turned-down collar of his shirt; his clothes fit him loosely; he walks gravely and slowly. You are in doubt whether you see in him the good, honest, and methodical workman, or the retired soldier; sometimes he is an artisan, possibly he is a capitalist.

He is brave and self-denying. You will see him in the street defending an irrational animal against the rational brute his master. At a fire he is the first you will see in the midst of the flames, endeavouring to save whatever there is to save, whether life or property. His house is well known to borrowers and the unfortunate. His sympathies are inexhaustible, and his purse is not unfrequently drawn upon, even by the holder of state securities, and he who is deaf to matters affecting his own interests feels keenly for those of others. His political ideas converge round a single principle, that of fraternity, of which liberty and equality are the inevitable consequences. As to the form of government he desires, he is undecided. He has an ideal, but he does not like to pain his queen; on the other hand, he does not wish it to rest entirely with the people. His mind is constantly engaged in the consideration of this matter, to the neglect of his personal interests.

The Moderado. He is somewhat advanced in years. He gets himself up with care and taste, but without pretension; he is commonly bald; wears bristling moustaches and whiskers, after the pattern worn by the Frenchman of

1830. His eyes are quick and penetrating, and his forehead broad. This citizen, if he was not a Liberal de Corazon ten years ago, has the most advanced political ideas. But he was, probably, a capitalist, interested in business, and has been subdued by their influences; or else he held some post in the public service, and had to consider his advancement; or he was an artisan, or foreman, required privileges from the government, and had, therefore, to submit to the influence of those who had the conferring of these privileges, and had need of his services. He has earnest desires, but they are kept down by the exigencies which weigh upon him. He quibbles in stating his opinions, and while letting you see that he is neither fish nor flesh nor good red-herring, he loudly proclaims his independence. He utters sounding platitudes on the advantages of a constitutional government, but never defines what he means. He declares he does not like all priests, but he does not consider them dangerous; he goes to mass, and allows his wife to go to confession. He proclaims equality before the law, but not before the privileges it confers. At bottom, he is a fairly honest man and a good citizen.

The Red Republican. His physiognomy is severe, but you can see very little of it, on account of the hair with which it is covered; which neither scissors nor razor ever touch. His eyes are oval and expressive, and gleam beneath a pair of thick eyebrows. His mouth is invisible, and the sounds which issue from it are of a deep bass; he generally speaks slowly, but when he is excited and speaks quickly, the deep utterance of his words has an imposing and powerful effect.

He will not hear of tergiversation in politics, he has no sympathy for any form of government but one—the republican. The Neo-Catholics, the Catholics who would resort to the old system of burning opponents, he regards as vipers, and he asserts that the only way of preventing them from stinging is to crush them. His politics are of the homœopathic kind; he would destroy those who would rejoice in destruction. To attack public liberty, to force society back towards the middle ages, are crimes which he considers worthy of death. He will not yield a hair's breadth to the arguments of his friends the Progresistas, he is immovably opposed to anything which looks like reactionism. For the rest, he emulates the probity of Marat the Frenchman, the scrupulousness of Robespierre, and the bravery of men like Hoche and Marceau. Faces like his must have been seen looking out through many a loophole in the walls of Saragossa.

The Socialista. His face would be pronounced haggard on account of the expression of his eyes, which show how deeply he revolves the liberal ideas of the first type described. Like the Liberal de Corazon, his movements are free and unconstrained, his dress is simple; his hair, often rough and unkempt, denote the constant occupation of his mind on an absorbing idea. He seldom shaves, except when he is more content than usual; this philanthropic thinker is constantly seeking the solution of one of the greatest problems of humanity—the extinction of pauperism. His ideas revolve in this labyrinth, and he suffers keenly before a frightful conviction which he constantly repels; he sees and understands that egotism, ambition, and greed, are the great obstacles to the friendship and welfare of peoples; he is alarmed by the evils which these maintain; he dwells on the misery which elbows riches, and forgets his own in the efforts he makes in seeking a remedy for these evils. His manner becomes fierce, and he terrifies the fortunate of Madrid, who endeavour to debase him by asserting that his desire is to plunder them.

Progresista. He is the extinct volcano. He is generally as much of a republican as the Liberal de Corazon, but he maintains that the Socialista does not endeavour to solve the most urgent questions. He desires to moderate the Republicano Rojo, or Red Republican, but he does not like the Moderado. He tells you that the time has not come for attacking the evil at its roots. His labours must yield prompt and peaceful results. He is not exclusive; he will occasionally admit liberty and progress in union with ancient traditions. He will be a monarchist with the Bourbons or any other, while waiting for the republic suited to the manners of his country. The only methods he will consent to are pacific, while he will be severe on ministers and institutions. He avers that in Spain there are questions requiring immediate solution of far greater importance than those which engage the attention of other liberals. He has a sly and confident smile when he says that it is impossible to construct a monument by beginning at its summit. His appearance is indicative of the methodical man; his hair is carefully attended to, and his beard is rounded off in a particular manner; he wears a satin necktie, which he fastens with care, and has a preference for white waistcoats and black clothing.

Unionista. Ambitious of territorial aggrandisement, he would like the kingdom of Spain to include the whole peninsula. He considers the difference in the characters of the Spaniards and Portuguese of no account. He avers that the moral soldering of Portugal and Spain is possible under the sceptre of the king of the former country. This citizen has, probably, been at Lisbon, he has seen Hesler, and kissed the hand of the Lusitanian Dubarry, and vowed to her a solemn fidelity. To say that the celebrated courtesan has given him her hand to kiss, implies that he is a lion: he parts his hair in the fashionable style, and is particular as to his whiskers and moustaches. He attempts to be fascinating in his manner, and while waiting for the union of the two peoples, he mingles the scents of Barcelona with those of Portugal, and uses them profusely.

Pancista. The indifferent. He is immense, never bald, fleshy in body and mind. His hair is combed over his large ears and gives him the appearance of a horsedealer at a fair. He wears a flowered waistcoat, and a red or blue cravat. Financial companies are brimful of his species. He tells you with a fatuous air that

public affairs are matters of little moment to him provided his private affairs prosper.

The Dissidente. He has a large head and nose, and a mouth to correspond. His eyes are round, and move from side to side beneath arched eyebrows. He wears his hair curled, and thus gives a distinctive character to his head. It might be supposed that he labours under an infirmity of some kind, for he has a constant habit of clearing his throat, and disputing every statement made in his presence. With him nothing goes right; his political opinions may be summed up in the one word—contradiction. Tell him he is unjust, and ask him the reason why, and he will be troubled with his usual huskiness, and growl out some disconnected words of which you cannot by any possibility catch the meaning. If he be a deputy, he is the terror of the chamber. The most careful estimate of the number who will vote on a particular side on a division is upset by the unexpected manner in which he gives his vote. Remonstrate with him, and you will get no more satisfactory answer than—"You must make the best of it—the thing is done." Sometimes he is more or less of an orator, generally a good deal less than more, but the questions he takes up are mostly trivial, and he will work himself into a high state of excitement on the subject of a new frame for a Velasquez or a Murillo, or some matter equally unimportant.

Carlista. He is dry, rough, and tanned to an olive colour. His forehead is low, and his black greasy hair is flattened down on it after the fashion of Hogarth's line of beauty. His whiskers are enormous, and united to his moustaches. He has deeply-set eyes, which gleam on each side of an enormous aquiline nose. He He has a large heart, and his ideas are exalted, but they are narrow. He is devoted body and soul to his cause, which he believes good because it has root in the doctrines of legitimacy. The true Carlist is for one alone, whom he believes to be impeccable. So long as the father lives he does not acknowledge the son as his king. He construes hereditary rights in the strictest manner; for him there is but one Carlos, and the Carlos whom the Neo-Catholics propose to him has none of his sympathy. Apart from his obstinacy he is not much to be feared, except in the hands of others more cunning than he.

Neo-Catholic. He has straight black hair, which he combs straight down over his forehead. He is not precisely a hypocrite, nor has he the cunning of a man capable of setting the Thames on fire; he is an incarnate non possumus.

Absolutista Inquisitorial. This is merely a fuller development of the preceding. His hair is sleek and thin, his complexion of a reddish-brown, and his face bony; his eyes are deeply set, and are constantly moving from side to side. His aspect is stern, and no child would be tempted to play, still less to offer to play with him.

All his inclinations are towards the middle ages, and he would feel the greatest satisfaction in seeing the Inquisition and the stake in full work; burnt flesh would be a sweet-smelling odour in his nostrils. He is a leader who has the Neo-Catholic for his officer, and the Carlista for his soldier. He despairs of hooking the Dissidente, despises the Pancista, and has hopes of, one day or another, harpooning the Moderado.

There is one more type which is more or less common among all continental nations; the man who is secretly paid by the government. Sometimes he is a journalist, or he may be a barrister, or employed in a public office, or a member of the chamber; in the latter case he is bought, if he be clever, of necessity; if he be a nonentity, because his head counts on a division. In his dress he is neat and precise, wears a Ratazzi necktie and a Prince of Wales collar. He parts his hair in the middle, after the style in fashion at Madrid, "frizzes" the ends, and puts them behind his ears. As the recognised creature of Narvaez or O'Donnell, he is met with everywhere in society, but is generally regarded as a bore. Occasionally, however, he tells an anecdote worth listening to, such as the following, for example. A grand dinner was given by the queen just previous to the departure of O'Donnell for the war, at which she spoke as follows in a voice of deep emotion:

"General, my heart beats impatiently for the arrival of the news of the victories you are about to gain; you will shortly return to us with fresh laurels for our beloved country. How great would be my joy if I could command the valiant army who awaits your arrival with such great ardour. Oh! how deeply I regret that I am not a man!——"

The emotion of the queen overpowered her. She was silent, and everybody else was silent too, waiting for her to recover herself and continue her address. All at once the deep silence was broken by a soft voice, tremulous with emotion, which exclaimed: "Ah! so do I!" It was the king who spoke.

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HALF A MILLION OF MONEY.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "BARBARA'S HISTORY."

CHAPTER L. HIGH ART.

As Saxon's cab turned in at the gates of the South-Western Railway station, Mr. William Trefalden, who chanced to be in the occupation of a very similar Hansom, was driving rapidly down the Waterloo-road. The two vehicles with their unsuspecting occupants had been almost side by side on Waterloo Bridge, and, by one of those curious coincidences which happen still oftener in real life than in fiction, the one cousin was going down into Surrey as the honoured guest of Lady Castletowers, while the other was rattling over to Camberwell in search of her ladyship's disinherited half-sister.

"Six, Brudenell Terrace."

Mr. Trefalden took the card from his pocket-book, and read the address over once or twice. It was the same card that Miss Rivière had given to Saxon, and which Saxon had entrusted to the lawyer's keeping a couple of hours before. Mr. Trefalden was a prompt man of business, and was showing himself to be, in the present instance, better than his word. He had promised to act for his young kinsman in this matter; but he had not promised to set about the task that same afternoon. Yet here he was with his face already turned southwards, and Miss Rivière's address in his hand.

The fact was, that Mr. Trefalden took more interest in this piece of family history than he had chosen to express, and was bent on learning all that might be learnt about the Rivières without an hour's unnecessary delay. No man better appreciated the value of a family secret. There might, it is true, be nothing very precious in this particular specimen; but then one could never tell what might, or might not, be useful hereafter. At all events, Mr. Trefalden was not slow to see his way to possible advantages; and though he had asked time for consideration of what it might be best to do, he had half a dozen schemes outlined in his mind before Saxon left the office. Mr. Trefalden's plans seldom needed much elaboration. They sprang from his fertile brain like Minerva from the head of Zeus, armed at all points, and ready for the field.

Leaning back thoughtfully, then, with folded arms, and a cigar in his mouth, Mr. Trefalden drove past the Obelisk and the Elephant and Castle, and plunged into the very heart of that dreary suburban district which might with much propriety be called by the general name of Transpontia. Then, dismissing his cab at a convenient point, he proceeded in search of Brudenell Terrace on foot.

Transpontia is a district beset with difficulties to the inexperienced explorer. There dust, dissent, and dulness reign supreme. The air is pervaded by a faint odour of universal brick-field. The early muffin-bell is audible at incredible hours of the day. Files of shabby-genteel tenements, and dismal slips of parched front-garden, follow and *do* resemble each other with a bewildering monotony that extends for long miles in every direction, and is only interrupted here and there by a gorgeous gin-palace, or a depressing patch of open ground, facetiously called a "green," or a "common." Of enormous extent, and dreary sameness, the topography of Transpontia is necessarily of the vaguest character.

Mr. Trefalden was, however, too good a Londoner to be greatly baffled by the intricacies of any metropolitan neighbourhood. He pursued his way with a Londoner's instinct, and, after traversing a few small squares and by-streets, found himself presently in face of Brudenell Terrace.

It was a very melancholy terrace, built according to the strictest lodging-house order of architecture, elevated some four feet above the level of the street, and approached by a dilapidated flight of stone steps at each extremity. It consisted of four-and-twenty dingy, eight-roomed houses, in one or other of which, take them at what season of the year one might, there was certain to be either a sale or a removal going forward. In conjunction with the inevitable van, or piece of stair-carpeting, might also be found the equally inevitable street organ—that "most miraculous organ," which can no more be silenced than the voice of murder itself; and which in Transpontia hath its chosen home. The oldest inhabitant of Brudenell Terrace confessed to never having known the hour of any day (except Sunday) when some interesting native of Parma or Lucca was not to be heard grinding his slow length along from number one to number twenty-eight. On the present

occasion, however, when Mr. Trefalden knocked at the door of the house for which he was bound, both van and Italian boy were at the further end of the row.

A slatternly servant of hostile bearing opened six inches of the door, and asked Mr. Trefalden what he wanted. That gentleman intimated that he wished to see Mrs. Rivière.

"Is it business?" said the girl, planting her foot sturdily against the inner side of the door.

Mr. Trefalden at once admitted that it was business.

"Then it's Miss Rivers you want," said she, sharply. "Why didn't you say so at first?"

Mr. Trefalden attempted to explain that he should prefer to see Mrs. Rivière, if she would receive him; but the belligerent damsel refused to entertain that proposition for one moment.

"It's nothing to me what you prefer," said she, with prompt indignation. "You can't see Mrs. Rivers. If Miss Rivers won't do, you may as well go away at once."

So the lawyer was fain to enter the citadel on such terms as he could get.

He was shown into a front parlour, very poorly furnished. The window was partially darkened by a black blind, and close beneath it stood a table strewn with small photographs and drawing materials. A bonnet and shawl lay on the sofa behind the door. Three or four slight sketches in water-colours were pinned against the walls. An old-fashioned watch in a bronze stand of delicate foreign workmanship, occupied the centre of the mantelshelf; and in the further corner of the room, between the fireplace and window, were piled a number of old canvases with their faces to the wall. Mr. Trefalden divined the history of these little accessories at a glance. He knew, as well as if their owners had told him so, that the watch and the canvases were relics of poor Edgar Rivière, and that the little water-colour sketches were by the artist's daughter. These latter were very slight—mere outlines, with a dash of colour here and there—but singularly free and decisive. One represented a fragment of Cyclopean wall, tapestried with creeping plants; another, a lonely mediæval tower, with ragged storm-clouds drifting overhead; another, a group of stone pines at sunset, standing up, bronzed and bristling, against a blood-red sky. All were instinct with that open-air look which defies imitation; and in the background of almost every subject were seen the purple Tuscan hills. William Trefalden was no indifferent judge of art, and he saw at once that these scrawls had genius in them.

While he was yet examining them, the door opened noiselessly behind him, and a rustling of soft garments near at hand warned him that he was no longer alone. He turned. A young girl, meanly dressed in some black material, with only a slip of white collar round her throat, stood about half way between the window and the door—a girl so fair, so slight, so transparent of complexion, so inexpressibly fragile-looking, that the lawyer, for the first moment, could only look at her as if she were some delicate marvel of art, neither to be touched nor spoken to.

"You asked to see me, sir?" she said, with a transient flush of colour; for Mr. Trefalden still looked at her in silence.

"I asked to see Mrs. Rivière," he replied.

The young lady pointed to a chair.

"My mother is an invalid," she said, "and can only be addressed through me. Will you take a seat?"

But Mr. Trefalden, instead of taking a seat, went over to the corner where the dusty canvases were piled against the wall, and said:

"Are these some of your father's pictures?"

Her whole face became radiant at the mention of that name.

"Yes," she replied, eagerly. "Do you know his works?"

Mr. Trefalden paused a moment before answering this question. Then, looking at her with a grave, almost a tender courtesy, he said:

"I knew his works, my dear young lady—and I knew him."

"You knew him? Oh, you knew a good man, sir, if you knew my dear, dear father!"

"A good man," said Mr. Trefalden, "and a fine painter."

Her eyes filled with sudden tears.

"If the world had but done him justice!" she murmured.

Mr. Trefalden thought he had never seen eyes so beautiful or so pathetic.

"The world never does justice to its finer spirits," said he, "till they have passed beyond reach of its envy or hearing of its praise. But his day of justice will come."

"Do you think so?" she said, drawing a little nearer, and looking up at him with the half-timid, half-trusting candour of a child. "Alas! I have almost given up hoping."

"Never give up hoping. There is nothing in this world so unstable as its injustice—nothing so inevitable as its law of reward and retribution. Unhappily, its laurels are too often showered upon tombs."

"Did you know him in Italy?"

"No—in England."

"Perhaps you were one of his fellow-students?"

Mr. Trefalden shook his head.

"No; I am a true lover of the arts," he replied, "but no artist. I had a sincere admiration for your father's genius, Miss Rivière, and it is that admiration which brings me here to-day. I am anxious to know what pictures of his may still be in the possession of his family, and I should be glad to purchase some, if I might be allowed to do so."

A look of intense gladness, followed by one of still more intense pain, flashed over the girl's pale face at these words.

"I trust I have said nothing to annoy you,"

said Mr. Trefalden, as deferentially as if this fragile young creature were a stately princess, clad in cloth of gold and silver.

"Oh no, thank you," she replied, tremulously. "We shall be very glad to—to sell them."

"Then I have your permission to look at these?"

"I will show them to you."

But Mr. Trefalden would not suffer Miss Rivière to show him the pictures. They were too heavy, and too dusty; and he was so glad to have the opportunity of seeing them, that he considered nothing a trouble. Then he begged to be allowed to remove the black blind from the window; and when that was done, he dragged out the first picture, dusted it carefully with his own white handkerchief, and placed it in the best light the room afforded.

"That was one of his last," said the daughter, with a sigh.

It represented Apollo and Daphne—Apollo in an attitude expressive of despair, looking very like a fine gentleman in an amateur play, elegantly got up in the Greek style, and rather proud of his legs; with Daphne peeping at him coquettishly from the leaves of a laurel-bush. It was not a vulgar picture, nor even a glaringly bad picture; but it had all the worst faults of the French school with none of its vigour, and was academic and superficial to the last degree.

Mr. Trefalden, who saw all this distinctly, retreated, nevertheless, to the further side of the room, shaded his eyes with his hands, and declared that it was an exquisite thing, full of poetry and classical feeling.

Then came a Cupid and Psyche on the point of leading off a pas de deux; a Danæ in a cataract of yellow ochre; an Endymion sleeping, evidently, on a stage-bank, by the light of a practicable moon; a Holy Family; a Cephalus and Procris; a Caractacus before Claudius; a Diana and Calisto, and about a score of others—enough to fill a gallery of moderate size; all after the same pattern; all repeating the same dreary round of hackneyed subjects; all equally correct and mediocre.

Mr. Trefalden looked patiently through the whole collection, opening out those canvases which were rolled up, and going through the business of his part with a naturalness that was beyond all praise. He dwelt on imaginary beauties, hesitated over trifling blemishes, reverted every now and then to his favourites, and, in short, played the enlightened connoisseur to such perfection that the poor child by his side was almost ready to fall down and worship him before the exhibition was over.

"How happy it would have made him to hear you, sir," she said, more than once. "No one ever appreciated his genius as you do!"

To which Mr. Trefalden only replied with sympathetic courtesy, that he was "sorry to hear it."

Finally, he selected four of the least objectionable of the lot, and begged to know on what terms he might be permitted to possess them.

This question was referred by Miss Rivière to her mother, and Mr. Trefalden was finally entreated to name his own price.

"Nay, but you place me in a very difficult position," said he. "What if I offer too small a sum?"

"We do not fear that," replied the young girl, with a timid smile.

"You are very good; but . . . the fact is that I may wish to purchase several more of these paintings—perhaps the whole of them, if Mrs. Rivière should be willing to part from them."

"The whole of them!" she echoed, breathlessly.

"I cannot tell at present; but it is not improbable."

Miss Rivière looked at Mr. Trefalden with awe and wonder. She began to think he must be some great collector—perhaps Rothschild himself!

"In the mean while," said he, "these being only my first acquisitions, I must keep my expenditure within a moderate limit. I should not like to offer more than two hundred pounds for these four paintings."

Two hundred pounds! It was as if a tributary of Pactolus had suddenly flowed in upon that humble front parlour and flooded it with gold. Miss Rivière could hardly believe in the actual existence of so fabulous a sum.

"I hope I do not seem to under-estimate their value," said the lawyer.

"Oh no—indeed!"

"You will, perhaps, submit my proposition to Mrs. Rivière?"

"No, thank you—I—I am quite sure—your great liberality. . . ."

"I beg you will call it by no such name," said Mr. Trefalden, with that little deprecatory gesture that showed his fine hand to so much advantage. "Say, if you please, my sense of justice, or, better still, my appreciation of excellence."

Here he took a little roll of bank-notes from his pocket-book, folded, and laid them on the table.

"I trust I may be permitted to pay my respects to Mrs. Rivière when I next call," he said. "She will not, perhaps, refuse the favour of an interview to one who knew her husband in his youth."

"I am sure mamma will be most happy," faltered Miss Rivière. "She is very delicate; but I know she will make the effort, if possible. We—we are going back soon to Italy."

And her eyes, as she said this, wandered involuntarily towards the packet of notes.

"Not *very* soon, I hope? Not immediately?"

"Certainly not immediately," she replied, with a sigh. "Mamma must be much better before she can travel."

Then Mr. Trefalden made a few politely sympathetic inquiries; recommended a famous West-end physician; suggested a temporary

sojourn at Sydenham or Norwood; and ended by requesting that the hostile maid-servant might fetch a cab for the conveyance of his treasures. He then took his leave, with the intimation that he would come again in the course of a few days, and go over the pictures a second time.

The door had no sooner closed behind him, than Miss Rivière flew up to her mother's bedroom, with the bank-notes fluttering in her hand.

"Oh, mamma! mamma!" she cried, flinging herself on her knees beside the invalid's easy-chair, and bursting into sobs of joy, "he has taken four of papa's paintings, and given—oh! what do you suppose?—given two hundred pounds for them! Two hundred pounds, all in beautiful, real bank-notes—and here they are! Touch them—look at them! Two hundred pounds—enough to take you to Italy, my darling, six times over!"

CHAPTER LI. BRADSHAW'S GUIDE FOR MARCH.

William Trefalden sat alone in his private room, in a somewhat moody attitude, with his elbows on his desk, and his face buried in his hands. A folded deed lay unread before him. To his right stood a compact pile of letters with their seals yet unbroken. Absorbed in profound thought, he had not yet begun the business of the day, although more than an hour had elapsed since his arrival in Chancery-lane.

His meditations were interrupted by a tap at the door; and the tap was instantaneously followed by Mr. Keckwitch. The lawyer started angrily from his reverie.

"Why the deuce do you come in like that?" he exclaimed. "What do you want?"

"Beg your pardon, sir," replied the head clerk, with a rapid glance at the pile of unopened letters, and the unread deed. "Messenger's waitin' for Willis and Barlow's bond; and you said I was to read it over to you before it went out."

Mr. Trefalden sighed impatiently, leaned back in his chair, and bade his clerk "go on;" whereat the respectable man drew the back of his hand across his mouth, and began.

"Know all men by these presents that we, Thomas Willis of number fourteen Charlcote-square in the parish of Hoxton in the County of Middlesex and John Barlow of Oakley villa in the parish of Brompton in the county of Middlesex Esquire, are jointly and severally holden and firmly bounden unto Ebenezer Foster, and Robert Crompton of Cornhill in the parish of St. Peters upon Cornhill in the County of Middlesex Bankers and copartners in the sum of five thousand pounds of lawful British money to be paid to the said Ebenezer Foster and Robert Crompton their executors administrators and assigns or their lawful attorney and attornies for which payment to be well and faithfully made we bind ourselves jointly and severally and our and any two or one of our heirs executors and administrators firmly by these presents sealed with our respective seals. Dated which I have left blank, sir, not knowing when the signatures will be made."

"Quite right," said Mr. Trefalden, dreamily. "Go on."

The head clerk then proceeded in the same thick, monotonous tone, wading on from stage to stage, from condition to condition, till he came at length to—"Then and in such case the above written bond or obligation shall become void and of no effect, or else shall remain in full force, power, and virtue;" having read which, he came to a dead pause.

And then again, for the third time, Mr. Trefalden said:

"Go on."

Mr. Keckwitch smiled maliciously.

"That's the end of the deed, sir," he replied.

"The end of the deed?"

"Yes, sir. It struck me that you didn't hear much of it. Shall I go through it again?"

Mr. Trefalden bit his lip with unconcealed annoyance.

"Certainly not," he said, sharply. "That voice of yours sends me to sleep. Leave the bond with me, and I will glance over it myself."

So saying, he snatched the paper from the hand of his clerk, pointed to the door, and compelled himself to go through the document from beginning to end.

This done, and the messenger despatched, he dropped again into his accustomed seat, and proceeded mechanically to examine his diurnal correspondence. But only mechanically; for though he began with the top letter, holding it open with his left hand, and shading his eyes with his right, there was that in his thoughts which blotted out the sense of the words as completely as if the page were blank before him.

By-and-by, after staring at it vacantly for some ten minutes or more, William Trefalden crushed the letter in his hand, flung it on the table, and, exclaiming half aloud, "Fool that I am!" pushed his chair hastily back, and began walking up and down the room.

Sometimes fast, sometimes slowly, sometimes stopping short in his beat for a minute at a time, the lawyer continued for the best part of an hour to pace to and fro between the window and the door, thinking earnestly.

Of what? Of a woman.

He could scarcely bring himself to confess it to his own thoughts; and yet so it was—a fact not to be evaded, impossible to be ignored. William Trefalden was in love for the first time in his life; utterly, passionately in love.

Yes, for the first time. He was thirty-eight years of age, and he had never in his life known what it was to feel as he felt now. He had never known what it was to live under the despotism of a single idea. He was not a good man. He was an unscrupulous and radically selfish man. A man of cultivated taste, cold heart, and iron will. A man who set his own gratification before him as the end for which he

lived, and who was content to labour for that end as untiringly and steadfastly as other men labour for honour, or freedom, or their soul's salvation. A man who knew no law save the law of his own will, and no restraint save the restraint of his own judgment.

Up to this time he had regarded love as a taste, and looked upon women much in the same light as he looked upon fine wines, fine pictures, costly books, or valuable horses. They were one of the enjoyments of life—rather more troublesome, though perhaps not much more expensive than some other enjoyments; needing to be well dressed, as books to be well bound, or pictures well framed; needing also, like valuable horses, to be kindly treated; but, like horses, to be held or changed at the pleasure of their owners.

Such was the theory, and such (for the secret may as well be told here as elsewhere) was the practice of William Trefalden's life. He was no gamester. He was no miser. He was no usurer. He was simply that dangerous phenomenon—a man of cold heart and warm imagination; a refined voluptuary.

And this was the secret which for long years he had guarded with such jealous care. He loved splendour, luxury, pleasure. He loved elegant surroundings, a well-appointed table, well-trained servants, music, pictures, books, fine wines, fine eyes, and fine tobacco. For these things he had toiled harder than the poorest clerk in his employ. For these things he had risked danger and disgrace; and yet now, when he held the game on which he had staked his whole life already in his hand—now, in the very moment of success—this man found that the world contained one prize to obtain which he would willingly have given all the rest—nay, without which all the rest would be no longer worth possession.

Only a girl! Only a pale, pretty, dark-haired girl, with large, timid eyes, and a soft voice, and a colour that came and went fitfully when she spoke. A girl with ancient blood in her veins, and a certain child-like purity of bearing, that told, at the first glance, how she must be neither lightly sought nor lightly won. A girl who, though she might be poor to beggary, could no more be bought like a toy, than could an angel be bought from heaven.

It was surely madness for William Trefalden to love such a girl as Helen Rivière! He knew that it was madness. He had a dim feeling that it might be ruin. He struggled against it—he fought with it—he flung himself into work, but all in vain. He was no longer master of his thoughts. If he read, the page seemed to have no meaning for him; if he tried to think, his mind wandered; if he slept, that girlish face troubled his dreams, and tormented him with despair and longing. For the first time in his life, he found himself the slave of a power which it was vain to resist. Well might he pace to and fro in utter restlessness of mind and body! Well might he curse his fate and his folly, and chafe against the chain that he was impotent to break! He had known strong impulses, angry passions, eager desires, often enough in the course of his undisciplined life; but never, till now, that passion or desire which was stronger than his own imperial will.

In the mean while the soul of Abel Keckwitch was disquieted within him. His quick ear caught the restless echo in the inner room, and he felt more than ever convinced that there was "something wrong somewhere." Mr. Trefalden had not opened his letters. Mr. Trefalden had not read the deed which awaited him upon his desk. Mr. Trefalden had not attended to a word of the important bond which he, Abel Keckwitch, notwithstanding his asthma, had laboriously read aloud to him from beginning to end. Nor was this all. Mr. Trefalden looked pale and anxious, like a man who had not slept the night before, and was obviously troubled in his mind. These were significant facts—facts very perplexing and tormenting; and Mr. Keckwitch sorely taxed his ingenuity to interpret them aright.

In the midst of his conjectures, Mr. Trefalden, who had an appointment in the Temple for half-past twelve, came out of his private room, and, glancing round the office, said:

"Where are those paintings that I brought home the other day?"

Mr. Keckwitch tucked his pen behind his ear, and coughed before replying.

"In the cupboard behind the door, sir," said he. "I put 'em there—to be out of sight."

Mr. Trefalden opened the cupboard door, saw that the pictures were safe within, and, after a moment's hesitation, said:

"I took them for a bad debt, but they are of no use to me. You can have them, Keckwitch, if you like."

"I, sir!" exclaimed the head clerk, in accents of virtuous horror. "No, thank you, sir. None of your heathen Venuses for me. I should be ashamed to see 'em on the walls."

"As you please. At all events, any one who likes to take them is welcome to do so."

Saying which, Mr. Trefalden, with a slightly scornful gravity, left his clerks to settle the question of ownership among themselves, and went on his way. The pictures were, of course, had out immediately, and became the objects of a good deal of tittering, tossing up, and wit of the smallest kind. In the mean while, the head clerk found a pretext for going to his master's room, and instituted a rapid search for any stray scrap of information that might turn up.

It was a forlorn hope. Mr. Keckwitch had done the same thing a hundred times before, and had never found anything; save, now and then, a few charred ashes in the empty grate. But it was in his nature to persevere doggedly. On the present occasion, he examined the papers on the table, lifted the lid of William Trefalden's desk, peered between the leaves of the blotting-book, and examined the table drawers in which

the lawyer kept his stationery. In the latter he found but one unaccustomed article—an old continental Bradshaw for the month of March.

"It wasn't there this morning," mused this amateur detective, taking up the Guide and turning it over inquisitively. "It's the same he had when he went to that place in Switzerland—page turned down and all."

And then Mr. Keckwitch uttered a suppressed exclamation, for the turned-down page was in the midst of the Italian itinerary.

"Lucca—Magadino—Mantua—Mentone—Milan."

What, in Heaven's name, could William Trefalden have to do with Lucca, Magadino, Mantua, Mentone, or Milan? How was it possible that any one of these places should be mixed up with the cause of his present restlessness and preoccupation?

The clerk was fairly puzzled. Finding, however, no further clue in any part of the volume, he returned to his desk, and applied himself to a diligent search of the financial columns of the Times.

He would have been still more puzzled if, at that moment, he could have seen William Trefalden, with the same weary, half-impatient look upon his face, leaning over the parapet of the Temple Gardens, and staring down idly at the river. It was just one o'clock—the quietest hour of the day in nursemaid-haunted squares—and the lawyer had the place to himself. All was still and dreamy in the old gardens. Not a leaf stirred on the trees. Not a sound disturbed the cloistered silence. The very sky was grey and uniform, unbroken by a sunbeam or a cloud. Presently a barge drifted by with the current; while far away, from crowded bridge and busy street, there rose a deep and distant hum, unlike all other sounds with which the ear of man is familiar.

It was a dreamy day and a dreamy place, and, busy man as he was, Mr. Trefalden was, to all appearance, as dreamy as either. But it is possible to be dreamy on the surface, and wakeful enough beneath it; and Mr. Trefalden's dreaminess was of that outward sort alone. All moody quiet without, he was all doubt, fever, and perturbation within. Project after project, resolution after resolution, kept rising like bubbles to the troubled surface of his thoughts—rising, breaking, vanishing, and giving place to others. Thus an hour went by, and Mr. Trefalden, hearing the church clocks strike two, roused himself with the air of a man whose course is resolved upon, and went out through Temple Bar, into the Strand. His course was resolved upon. He had made up his mind never to see Helen Rivière again; and yet

And yet, before he had reached the gates of Somerset House, he had hailed a cab, and desired the driver to take him to Brudenell Terrace, Camberwell.

In the mean while, Mr. Keckwitch, who had been anxiously studying the closing prices of all sorts of Italian Railway, Banking, Telegraphic and Land Companies' Stock, believed that he had found the key to his employer's trouble when he read that the Great Milanese Loan and Finance Company's Six per Cent Bonds were down to sixteen and a half in the official list.

AN OGRE.

There are two kinds of leopards found in India. One is the cheetah, the common leopard of the plains of Hindostan. This creature confines his attacks chiefly to small antelopes, barking deer, and jungle-sheep. He is frequently caught when young, and tamed by the native shikarees, who teach him to assist them in hunting and driving game within shot of the guns of the sportsmen. The other kind of Indian leopard is the "luckabugga," a much larger and fiercer animal, who, when he has once tasted human blood, becomes an ogre, with a frightful appetite for children. He is chiefly found in the lower ranges of the Himalayas and vast jungles of the Terai.

One summer's evening I was out with a couple of friends on a shooting excursion, from Almora into Nepâl. Our tents were pitched on the banks of the Kala-nuddee, a river which parts the British possessions in the hills, from those of the Nepâl rajah. We were getting our guns ready to go out after some black partridges for supper, when the head man of the neighbouring British village of Petoragurh came up to entreat our assistance in killing a leopard, which had haunted some neighbouring villages for many months, and had already carried off twelve children. Traps and pitfals had been set for him in vain. He had evaded all. A poor Zemindar had just come into the village with a woful story about his six-year-old boy—his only boy—who, when playing before the door of his father's hut in the dusk of the evening, had been seized by the leopard and carried off before his father's eyes. The poor man followed the animal and struck it repeatedly with an iron hoe, but it held on and vanished in the jungle. At daylight he had hunted on the track with some friends, but found only a few bones and some bloody hair, remains of his child, that a jackal was picking at, and a vulture watching. The man said he had watched the place every night, but had never again seen the leopard.

The recital of this tragedy excited us, and we pledged ourselves not to leave the district until this cruel ogre was destroyed. Ram Bux, our head shikaree, was called, and ordered to make every inquiry as to his present whereabouts, and to offer a reward of ten rupees to any native who should give such information as would give us a shot at him.

It would be endless to relate the many false alarms we had. We sat up all night in trees, with a goat tied below as a bait, near the place where the leopard had been last seen. One night, while sitting in a tree with a gun-coolie who held my weapons, I fell into a doze. A friend in a tree about twenty yards off with a goat

below, roused me by the discharge of his rifle. My coolie seized me by the arm, and shrieked, "Sahib, sahib, luckabugga aya!" "Where, where?" I asked, seizing the double rifle he held out to me. "There," said he, pointing to a dark object moving through the trees about thirty yards off. Bang—bang—went both my barrels, followed immediately by unearthly yells. We descended from our trees, and found a large rough yellow pariah dog shot through both hind legs. He was yelling like a fiend, and snapping like a crocodile. I borrowed a large Ghoorkha kookrie from our shikaree, and, baring my right arm, brought it down with all my weight on the dog's neck, behind the head, in the way I had seen Ghoorkhas kill oxen. The dog was at once out of his pain.

One of my friends was very fat, and, as he found a branch of a tree rather inconvenient, had a common native charpoy (sort of bedstead) fixed up in a fork of a tree. On this he reclined, with a gun-coolie, and a large double-barrelled gun loaded with slugs. We were tired of the goat bait, so he had got a monkey, thinking that a child-eater might be more readily tempted by its flesh. I was posted in a tree, from which I could watch the approaches to my friend's post. About midnight the moon went down, and it was almost dark. Half an hour later I heard the monkey begin to chatter, so I cocked both barrels, and watched the foot of my friend's tree. The chattering increased. Then came a blaze of light and a loud report, followed by breaking of branches, and a perfect Babel of noise. I had a pine-torch with me, and, clambering down from my tree, lit it and rushed to the spot. There, on his face, lay my friend, screaming out for me. He had upset his bed. On his back sat the monkey, tearing at his hair like a wild-cat. A few yards off lay his coolie, with the charpoy on him smashed in half. He was roaring out, "The leopard is eating me." A little further on lay a jackal, writhing with a dozen slugs in him. I kicked up the coolie, and helped my friend by knocking the monkey over with the broken leg of the charpoy. After this little upset we lit cheroots and walked back to our tents, which were pitched about two miles off.

Ram Bux, our shikaree, had given notice to all the natives round about that if the leopard appeared and carried off anything, information was to be sent to our camp before any pursuit was made. One evening we were at our tent doors after dinner, smoking, when we observed, on the other (Nepâl) side of the river, a Ghoorkha coming down the hills at great speed. At the river bank he inflated a sheepskin which he carried, and crossed the rapid stream on it—just as we see on their wall carvings that the old Assyrians did—being carried down about a quarter of a mile by the current. On landing he was met by Ram Bux, who had run out on seeing him approach. They walked towards us, the Ghoorkha gesticulating violently, and we heard the following story:

The Ghoorkha lived in a hut about a mile from our camp, higher up the river, and only a hundred yards from the water. He had been out for the day on his duty, which was that of a government runner, leaving at home his wife, a baby in arms, and a little girl about six years old. The wife had gone to the stream for water, leaving the two children at the hut door. As she returned she had heard a scream, and, throwing down her pitcher, ran forward, and found at the hut door only her baby. The little girl had disappeared, and, without doubt, had been carried off by the leopard. The Ghoorkha found its footmarks on a soft bit of ground, and hastened to us without attempting a pursuit in the dense jungle. Ram Bux decided that it was too late to start that night, but asked us to be ready one hour before daylight. In the mean time he sent to the next village for twenty coolies, who were engaged as beaters at fourpence a head.

On turning out in the starlight next morning, I saw that our followers and beaters had each got some instrument for making noise. There were tin-kettles, tom-toms, bells, and an old matchlock or two. I and my two friends crossed the river on a plank lashed across two inflated buffalo skins, which kept our guns and powder high out of water. The beaters came over in all sorts of ways, some swimming, some clinging to inflated sheepskins.

When we reached the Ghoorkha's hut, the whole of our beaters were extended in a line, I standing in the middle, at the spot where the Ghoorkha had found traces of the leopard. The poor Ghoorkha himself, and Ram Bux, leading a Brinjarry dog in a string, were with me: each of them carried a spade. At a given signal the whole line started. The beaters yelled, whistled, rang bells, and beat tom-toms, making noise enough to drive away every leopard within five miles. The dog kept steadily to the scent; but our progress at times was very slow through the dense bamboo jungle.

After proceeding about a mile, the dog became very eager, dashed forward, and was not easily held in. In fifty more yards we came to the place where the brute had been supping. The mangled remains of the little girl lay about, only half eaten, and the ogre must have been scared by our noise. Without losing a moment, the Ghoorkha and Ram Bux set to work and dug a trench under a tree to leeward of the child's remains, piling up some branches between them and the trench. Ram Bux and I jumped into this trench. The Ghoorkha departed with the dog in the direction taken by the rest of our party; who kept up the same discordant din as they moved away.

Ram Bux now told me that the leopard—doubtless listening a mile off—would think, from the passing away of the noise, that the whole party had gone on, and would be sure to return in an hour or two to go on with his interrupted feast. We must be quiet, for the brute was very cunning, and the slightest sound or smell would send him off and destroy our

chance of getting a shot at him. After waiting an hour I pulled out my cigar-case, but Ram Bux forbade smoking by energetic gestures; neither of us speaking. I had a large double-barrelled smooth bore No. 12, loaded with slugs, at full cock in my hand. Ram Bux had my breech-loading rifle, with a large conical shell in it. In addition to these, I and Ram Bux had each a Ghoorkha kookrie, and I a revolving pistol. It was now nine in the morning. The noise of our party had died away over the hills for an hour or more. I had my eyes fixed on the movements of a regiment of white ants, that were piling themselves over a bloody fragment of the poor child that lay about ten yards before me. Suddenly Ram Bux put one finger on my lips, both as a sign to look out and to keep perfectly still. My fingers sought the triggers, and my eyes were strained in every direction. I could see nothing, until, in about two minutes, I discerned that the grass waved, and the next instant, with a tread of velvet, the leopard glided in front of me. The suddenness of his appearance took my breath away for some seconds, but, recovering myself, I raised my gun to the shoulder, and in doing this snapped off a little twig from a branch of the brushwood we had piled in front of us.

The leopard turned his face full on me. Thinking that he would jump off, I pulled at his chest, letting off, in my nervousness, both barrels. He sprang into the air with a yell, and fell backward. Ram Bux was out and by his side before I had risen from my knees, and had discharged the rifle in the direction of his heart. When I got up with revolver in one hand and kookrie knife in the other, the brute was tearing up the grass and roots with all four paws, and dangerous to approach. My slugs had entered his chest and eyes, and he was blind. I discharged my revolver at his hind quarters; but he writhed and leaped about so violently, that it was impossible to take good aim. Ram Bux, with his kookrie drawn, was dodging about for an opportunity of coming close enough to cut at the dangerous hind legs and sever the tendons. I went back to the trench to load my gun. As I was capping, the grass opened, and the Ghoorkha with his dog rushed up. He had evidently been waiting near, and hearing the guns fire, had hurried to revenge his child. He gave a shout of joy when he saw the animal kicking and bleeding, let go his dog, who darted at the throat of the leopard, and then himself, disregarding claws and teeth, rushed in upon him. With two strokes of his kookrie he cut the hind tendons, and the formidable hind legs were harmless. At the same moment I stepped up and discharged one barrel into the monster's gaping and bleeding mouth. This shot killed it. Ram Bux and the Ghoorkha began skinning, while I lighted a cheroot. On taking the skin off the back we came upon two fresh-healed cuts which went right through the skin, and remembered what the poor Zemindar told us a week ago of his following and hacking with a hoe at the monster, who was carrying off his child.

After a hot march of an hour or more, we got into camp before noon, and had an ovation from the people of the adjacent villages. Every one who had lost a child by the leopard asked for one of its claws, which was hung round the neck of the mourner as an amulet.

The skin now lies on the floor of the billiard-room of a castle in the North of England.

ILL IN A WORKHOUSE.

Ill in a workhouse! How many of our readers are there, we wonder, who would form a guess, even near the truth, as to the number of the unfortunates who might be thus described. The eighteen London voluntary hospitals provide three thousand seven hundred and thirty-eight beds; but the metropolitan workhouses contain, according to the Lancet, twenty-six thousand six hundred and twenty-two sick and infirm persons, besides one thousand six hundred and eighty-three insane. Humanity demands that these poor creatures should be rightly tended; and, even if we could lose sight of humanity altogether, the dictates of policy would guide us in the same direction.

We all know that the great requisites for the sick are skilful medical attendance, good food, good nursing, and pure air. These things are all so essential that it would be difficult to estimate their relative importance; but perhaps pure air ought to come first. In the voluntary hospitals of London the number of cubic feet of space allotted to each patient ranges from one thousand three hundred to two thousand, in different institutions. In military hospitals one thousand two hundred feet is the regulation minimum; but, in workhouse hospitals for some unexplained reason, the Poor Law Board sanctions a minimum of five hundred cubic feet. It is not too much to say that sick persons cannot get well in so confined a space. They may survive. They may struggle through the acute stage of disease, or through the earlier effects of an accident, into a state of chronic feebleness; but they will never get *well*, not even if they are kept tolerably clean. Windows may be opened in the daytime, if the weather be fine; but the patients will poison one another at night.

The wisdom of the legislature places the practical administration of the poor law into the hands of guardians, who are mostly elected because they are prominent men as local politicians, and who very seldom have any knowledge of what is really involved in the questions with which they have to deal—no real practical knowledge of the poisonous effect of foul air upon the sick, or, for that matter, upon the sound. But they know perfectly well that space costs money, and they are apt to think that their office of guardianship calls upon them to guard the poor's rates, rather than the poor themselves. The Poor Law Board order five hundred cubic feet of

space, and the guardians think they can save a few pounds by keeping a little below this very humble standard. We have heard somewhere that the whole workhouse space of the metropolis gives an average of only three hundred cubic feet to each inmate. According to the Lancet, which medical authority has been doing vast service in this matter of late, there are many wards in which the space does not exceed four hundred and fifty feet per bed; and some in which it falls to four hundred and twenty-nine; and, in such places as these, cases of contagious fever are scattered about among the other patients.

In the voluntary hospitals of London, the number of surgeons and physicians, for the in-patients alone, ranges from eight to ten for each institution, and these find their duties to be no sinecure, although assisted in their performance by an army of house-surgeons, dressers, clinical clerks, and pupil-assistants of various kinds. A workhouse hospital, containing, perhaps, one hundred and fifty or two hundred beds, will be under the sole charge of a "medical officer," who is sometimes a general practitioner in the vicinity, sometimes a young man debarred from private practice and holding his appointment only until something more eligible offers itself. In the former case, the medical officer cannot have the time, and in the latter case he can scarcely ever have the knowledge, necessary for the proper management of the various and numerous forms of sickness that fall under his care. Medical officers of workhouses are only human; and, when human creatures are placed in such a position that their duties altogether transcend their powers, they invariably fall as much below the standard of what is possible, as their ideal or nominal standard is placed above it. No man can undertake a hospital with two hundred inmates, and really exercise his mind about them all, watch the changes in their conditions, and trace out the causes of their sufferings. If he begin by an honest attempt to achieve this utter impossibility, he will soon break down; and will in most cases speedily reconcile himself to a merely formal discharge of his duties in outward show; going among his people and asking them trivial or customary questions, without bringing his faculties to bear upon the significance of their replies, and giving them only the deceptive seeming of attendance, in lieu of the living reality.

In all cases of serious illness, the best efforts of the medical practitioner will be of no avail, unless seconded by proper and careful nursing; and the necessity for such nursing will be greater, the less the doctor is able to superintend the manner in which his orders are carried out. In voluntary hospitals, where such superintendence may be constant and unremitting, it has been found necessary or useful to supersede the paid nurses of a few years ago by a higher class of persons, specially trained to the right discharge of their respective duties, and fitted, by intelligence and moral character, to exercise authority and maintain discipline in their wards. In the majority of cases, the so-called (and sadly mis-called) "nurses" of a workhouse hospital are simply some of the able-bodied paupers who happen to be inmates at the time. As a rule, able-bodied paupers, male or female, are persons who, by some kind of misconduct, have ceased to be able to maintain themselves honestly. Either they are too stupid, or too lazy, or too immoral, to earn a living at the business to which they have been brought up. And on this account they are employed by guardians on a business which requires a special training, a trustworthy character, and an aptitude for obtaining a moral ascendancy over others. It appears, however, that a system of paid nursing is gradually creeping in and gaining ground at several workhouses, and that it must in time supersede the present arrangement. The chief fear is lest the paid nurses, like the paid doctors, should be numerically insufficient for the discharge of their onerous duties.

With regard to the question of proper food there is no difficulty with the actually sick, if the doctor will assert and use the power which the law gives him. It not unfrequently happens that very great difficulties are thrown in his way by officials whose primary object is to "keep down the rates," and who are not sufficiently far-sighted to discover the eventual loss entailed by the careful saving of the present sixpence. The master of a workhouse has much power to thwart and annoy a medical officer, and the guardians have still more. Any contests with these officials on the question of diet or extras seldom fails to impair the efficiency of the medical service of the institution, and to recoil at last upon the sick. Where the medical officer possesses tact and firmness to use his authority without giving offence, he may in most cases succeed in obtaining any diet he pleases for cases actually in the hospital; but, where he is wanting in these important qualities, it is not at all uncommon to find a considerable official pressure brought to bear upon "sick diets."

The diet of the so-called "infirm" is, in most cases, very unsuitable. "At present," says the Lancet, "the mischievous anomaly remains of allowing the guardians to pretend to feed aged and feeble persons upon the tough boiled beef and the indigestible pea-soup and suet-pudding of the house diet."

And again:

"Having carefully observed the infirm patients of many workhouses at their dinners, we are confident that the charge against the ordinary house dinners—that, from one cause or another, a very considerable portion of the materials is rejected by infirm persons—is correct. In one workhouse we were very much struck with a perfect heap of leavings which the nurse of an infirm ward was collecting at the end of dinner-time; and we have heard many bitter complaints of the pea-soup as causing pain and spasm in the stomach. Now clearly, whether the house diet be or be not theoreti-

cally adequate to support ordinary nutrition, it will not bear any serious diminution (from the rejection of a portion) without becoming entirely insufficient; and it is certain that such diminution will happen in the case of all persons who from any cause are at all delicate. It is true that the surgeon has the power to order for all such persons a proper special diet; but the labour of carrying this out in large workhouses is very great, and the temptation is consequently strong to adopt the laissez-faire system, and allow these poor folks to struggle with their nutritive difficulties as best they may."

"An objection has been raised, in our hearing, to the idea that the infirm are at all frequently underfed, on the score of the very great age to which many of them attain in workhouses. The fact of the frequent longevity of the infirm is undeniable, but the inference drawn therefrom is a mistaken one. True, these persons live long, but they live a life of a most low grade, with the minimum of mental and bodily activity; in fact, they subside more and more into a vegetative existence; and a part of this change is distinctly traceable to the persistent under-nutrition which they experience. An intelligent workhouse master has described to us a most interesting phenomena, which we have ourselves subsequently recognised, and which he calls the 'ward fever.' This is neither more nor less than a low febrile excitement which marks the transition from their old habits of occasional plenty and occasional starvation to the grim monotony of a diet which is, for the reasons above given, uniformly insufficient."

The first of the above-cited paragraphs contains an allusion to one great cause of dietetic mismanagement; namely, the trouble that all alterations or extras entail upon the medical officer.

The Poor Law Board is not sparing in the amount of book-keeping and form-filling exacted from all its officials; but, in very many cases, the books required answer some useful purpose, and are essential to the framing of some necessary or desirable account. The Workhouse Medical Relief Book is, however, little more than an ingenious contrivance for wasting the time of the surgeon. It professes to contain the name of every sick person, with the days on which he has been visited, and with the diet ordered for him; and it is so arranged that one entry of the name suffices for visits and diets for a week. It is supposed to be kept by the surgeon himself; and he is, at all events, required to initial every separate entry in it. In a workhouse where there are nine hundred sick the surgeon has to sign his initials in this book nine hundred times every week; and as the smallest change of diet would render it necessary to put the name of the pauper upon this dreadful list, there will seldom be any disposition to make the nine hundred into nine hundred and one, so long as even that small increase can be prevented. The ordinary plan is for the book to be kept by a clerk in the master's office, or by one of the inmates, the surgeon paying some gratuity to this irregular assistant. When the book-keeper hears that the doctor has "been round the house," he puts down a visit against the name of every sick inmate (although perhaps not one-fourth of them have been spoken to), and he also records all changes of diet, of which information is sent to him from the wards. Then, before the "board day," he waylays the doctor with, "Please, sir, to initial the book before you go." To "initial" nine hundred entries takes some time, and that time is deducted from the period allotted to the patients.

So much is the augmentation of the list dreaded, that it is the practice in many workhouses to provide the master with a big bottle of "house medicine," of "cough mixture," of "chalk mixture," and of other abominations, and to make every one who aspires to the dignity of being ill submit to a sort of probationary physicking from one or other of these bottles before he is admitted as a bonâ fide patient, and permitted to appear upon "the book." Common sense suggests that if a register of medical visits be required, it should not be kept by the doctor himself, and that the master is the person upon whom the registry of diets should devolve. If an authoritative medical order were required, it might be written (as in voluntary hospitals) upon a card at the bed-head of each patient.

A writer in the Lancet affirms that at St. Leonard's, Shoreditch, "Medicines are administered with shameful irregularity. Our inquiries showed that, of nine consecutive patients, only four were receiving their medicines regularly. A poor fellow lying very dangerously ill with gangrene of the leg, had had no medicines for three days, because, as the male "nurse" said, his mouth had been sore. The doctor had not been made acquainted with the fact that the man's mouth was sore, or that he had not had the medicines ordered for him. A female, also very ill, had not had her medicine for two days, because the very infirm old lady in the next bed, who, it seemed, was appointed by the nurse to fulfil this duty, had been too completely bedridden for the last few days to rise and give it to her. Other patients had not had their medicines because they had diarrhœa; but the suspension had not been made known to the doctor, nor had medicine been given to them for their diarrhœa. The nurses generally had the most imperfect idea of their duties in this respect. One nurse plainly avowed that she gave medicine three times a day to those who were very ill, and twice or once a day as they improved. The medicines were given all down a ward in a cup; elsewhere in a gallipot. The nurse said she 'poured out the medicine, and judged according.'

"In other respects," continues the report, "the nursing was equally deficient;" and we regret that the details of the deficiencies are too graphic to be reproduced. In a general review

of the question, however, there occurs the following passage:

"Let us picture to ourselves an infirmary where many of the wards are without tables, even for the dinners; where the medicine bottles are kept in a mass at the end of the ward with the food; where there are no prescription cards over any of the beds; where the sole medical officer, in addition to the cares of his private practice, has to perform, unaided, the whole medical service of about three hundred and forty sick patients, besides an equal total number of imbeciles and infirm—prescribing for them, dispensing for them, and being solely responsible for their entire medical care; being non-resident, and without either assistant or dispenser. Let any human being, who will calmly consider the case, suppose the position of patients in such a state of affairs: the medical officer having, in the course of the time which he can daily spare for his round, some three hours, to pass through all the wards, to carry in his memory the actual treatment employed, say for the three hundred and forty patients only, to determine what changes are necessary, to remember the alterations which he desires to make, and then set to work in his dispensary to send up the medicines. If the wretched state of the patients consequent upon the inevitable and entire failure of any one man to perform duties so extravagant were not terribly tragic, there would be something almost ludicrous in the assumption of the guardians that these poor sick people could possibly be tended by the ignorant (and usually lazy and vicious) pauper nurses under such a system. It is not to be wondered at that, in such an infirmary, abuses of the most saddening character are the rule rather than the exception."

When we know that the workhouse doctor is everywhere overworked, that the workhouse nurse is everywhere incompetent or scanty, that decent comforts for the sick are scarcely ever provided, that the occasional external cleanliness is the cleanliness of a whited sepulchre, it is surely time for the legislature to intervene between the sick poor and their so-called "guardians," who err, probably, in most cases, more from ignorance than from cruelty. The question is one of great importance to the public, on grounds of utility as much as on grounds of humanity. While the sick do not get well, the sound languish, and children pine and dwindle, among the noisome smells, the confined atmosphere, the unscientific diet, and the intolerable monotony, of workhouse life; and all these evils are of the most costly character to the community. A labouring man, working at a distance from home, falls ill and is sent into the house. There he either dies, or at best makes a tedious and imperfect convalescence, which still leaves him unable to maintain his family. His wife and children follow him; the first to lose all self-respect and self-reliance, the latter to exchange the liberty, and the comparatively wholesome dirt of the street and the gutter, for the confinement and the unwholesome dirt of a place from which they at last emerge, verminous and blear-eyed, with stupid faces, cadaverous skins, and shambling walk, unwilling to labour, unable to learn, and only fit, paupers themselves, to be the parents of paupers like unto them. If the father had chanced to go into a voluntary hospital, his family and the public might have been spared this evil and this cost. If the original sufferer were not a man, but a girl—some poor servant sent to the workhouse by her employers as soon as disease attacked her—then we can only draw a veil over the probable consequences of her admission, and say that sometimes, perhaps, death would be a greater mercy to her than recovery.

In conclusion, we have only to mention the waste of material for teaching medicine which the present system involves. The cases admitted into a workhouse infirmary are types and patterns of those met with in daily life. In a voluntary hospital the cases are above the average of severity, they are discharged if they are found to be incurable, and large classes of disease are altogether excluded. A young surgeon or physician who has been educated, at unusual cost, entirely at a hospital, may have distinguished himself greatly in some departments, and may enter upon practice with a high reputation, without having ever seen a case of measles or of whooping-cough, without being familiar with the treatment of many of the slight maladies that make up so much of the sum of human discomfort, and without having any practical bedside knowledge of the methods of relieving and palliating a variety of chronic and incurable ailments. These deficiencies would not exist if workhouse hospitals were available for the purposes of medical instruction. To make them available, they must be raised from their present state of dirt and squalor, and must be made to approximate, in cleanliness, in diet, in nursing, in medical and surgical attendance, to those noble hospitals, which are as much a national glory as our workhouses are a national disgrace.

SIXTY YEARS' CHANGES.

Among the happiest hours of my happy youth were those spent at a farm-house in Devonshire, near the mysterious mountain called Blackinstone, a huge granite tor, on whose top stands an enormous separate crowning stone, of which tradition says it was flung there by the Devil from Moreton Hampstead, being the result of a game at quoits, to which he was challenged by some bold fellow—they called him Dr. Faustus—who denied or doubted his satanic power, but whose defeat and humiliation are testified by another granite quoit, weighing some tons, which lies half way in the valley between the town and the tor. Its shape no doubt closely resembles that of the stone which his infernal majesty lodged safely on the Blackinstone's head.

The heathery, furzy, stony ridge of Dartmoor

runs down to the farm, whose name is Kingswell. It has its traditions too, and the monarch who honoured it with his visitations was no less than the King of the Fairy Elves, yclept Pixies in this neighbourhood. The oral recorders of their presence and their prowess are departed and almost forgotten now, but it was not so "when I was young—O woful when!" which I re-echo to the plaints of the Devonian poet, who, being of an earlier generation, knew more about the Pixies than I.

But in this region of romance I have seen the heaven-roofed hall in which the Pixies assembled, the green turf on which they danced, the granite fountains in which they bathed, and the buttercups out of which they drank. I have heard from the lips of the believing peasantry tales of their moonlight gatherings, their sportive wicked tricks; and though to my childish, and half-credulous inquiries, somewhat timidly urged, "Have you seen them, you yourself?" the answers were somewhat pitying and reproachful, as if doubt were sin: "Zure, us have yeard all about 'em from our vathers—it is as true as truth!" In later life I have known grave men, great authorities, look down upon *Doubters* as these rustics looked down upon me, and who have added to the pity and the reproach the condemnation and the anathema!

Brightly shone the sunshine when the tenant of Kingswell came to my father and asked him to allow me to pass part of my holidays at the farm. In those days a journey to Moreton (Moortown) was a somewhat perilous undertaking. No wheeled vehicle had ever traversed the road to Exeter. The "well-to-do" farmer came on horseback, generally carrying his wife or daughter on a pillion behind, who held themselves fast by a leathern belt round the waist of the rider—indeed, every precaution was needful to their safety, for the ways were rough, steep, and stony; slips from the high banks often brought down roots, earth, heavy blocks, and heaps of pebbles to interrupt the passage, which was sometimes darkened by the intertanglings of the branches above. Some of the hills to be ascended or descended were so sharp and abrupt, and the ground so shaky and shifting, that it was the custom to dismount and lead the horse. All commodities were then conveyed in "crooks" or "panniers," which were attached to wooden pack-saddles. They brought potatoes (highly valued for their superior quality, for they are said to flourish best in an ungrateful arid soil), barley, and other agricultural produce, to be sold in the uncovered market then held in the main street of Hexon, or Hexter, the name by which the provincial city was usually known. The manufacturing interest was not unimportant. In the times I speak of, the productions of the loom were nearly equal in value to those of the land. In every cottage the noise of the shuttle was heard, and when father, or mother, or grown-up children were not engaged in the field, they were occupied in the spinning of yarn, or the weaving of woollens—principally long ells for the trade with China, where they have retained their reputation to the present time. The same farmer who employed the labourer on his estate, distributed to him the weft and the warp, and collected the woven stuffs for account of the manufacturer and merchant in Exeter, who fulled, dyed, dressed, and packed them for exportation. The honest farmer, whose name was Smale, was one of my father's representatives, and every Friday the results of the week's gathering were brought to our mills. My affections had been warmed towards our friend by his hearty, loud-voiced greeting, the grasp of his hard hand was like that of a vice, and his "How bee 'e? How glad I be to zee 'e!" had all the ring of eloquence in my ears. Moreover, he frequently brought in a bag of what he called "waste stuff," which was barley, excellent for the use of my cocks and hens, and which I calculated gave me a considerable number of pence, when, having been paid by my mother for all the eggs consumed in the family, I made up the debtor and creditor account of the poultry-yard, which I was allowed to manage for my own personal pecuniary benefit.

Consent being obtained, and some clothes tied up in a pocket-handkerchief, I was trotted off, gay and happy as a goldfinch in spring, to the inn in the St. Thomas outskirt of the city, where a pack-saddled horse was selected for my accommodation. Off we trotted, but it was not long before I found the sharp wooden ridge of the saddle somewhat uncomfortable. I fancied it would be cowardly and unbecoming to utter a word of complaint; but a shaking and stumbling, and my balance more than once nearly lost, and a hand suddenly placed now behind and now before me for the sake of a little extra support, and no doubt a visible anxiety in my countenance, induced my protector to ask whether I might not like to walk a little: and great was my joy to think that the suggestion should come from him and not from me. I walked and walked till I was weary—made many an excuse for not getting up again—but in utter exhaustion consented to resume my seat on the uneasy edge, whose painful impressions did not abandon me for many a day.

After about eleven miles of weary travel we came to a narrow lane, which, opening from the highway, led to the valley below. We crossed a crystal brook filled with water-cresses, passed through a rude gate or two, reached the farmyard, and at the door of the house two rosy-cheeked damsels were waiting to welcome us with a welcome so cordial, that their bright eyes looked brighter, their faces glowed with a still richer red, and their smiles, how sweet, how very sweet, how very kind they were! Scarcely seated, when a plate of bread and cream was produced; they said the rule of the house was, that the bread was not to be thicker than the cream. O that rich clouted Devonshire cream! The Phœnicians (many thanks to them!) taught our forefathers to make it, and I can say, from personal knowledge, that the scholars now far

outstrip their masters in the art and craft. The depth of the slice from the loaf exceeded half an inch, covered with solid substantial cream. The rest may be fancied.

How I ran after the rabbits among the rocks, how I gathered whortleberries and blackberries, what nosegays I made of heath and honeysuckle, what a friend I found in the dog "Shepherd," who had a tail so short that it could scarcely be called a tail, and who was the most licking, loving, docile creature in the world, how I rejoiced in the blaze of the dry gorse which I was allowed to fling into the kitchen chimney; above all, how I obtained the favour of the good old father of the family, seated in his arm-chair by the rustic fire—is it not all written in the book of memory?

Many were the jokes which our Moortownian country cousins had to bear from the more refined citizens of the county capital, who sometimes honoured "the outer barbarians" with a visit, or more rarely invited them "to see life" in the western metropolis. "Why, you know very well who built your place, and how he forgot to make any road to it after the building!" "Who taught your fathers to make the cob walls, and brought the clay and the straw and the mortar to help you, long before you had a paved street or a glass window?" And then the rude rough idiom of Dartmoor was flung into the crucible of criticism by those whose own mother-English was not of the purest. "What d'ye call this?" said a young Exonian vagabond, when running away with a handful of oats from the sample-bag of a Moreton farmer, who vociferated to the passers-by: "Hurn! hurn arteren! he'th steyld my wets!"

It is a pity the hundreds of old Saxon words and forms of speech have been so imperfectly collected from the rural regions of Devon. Here is a conversation between a judge on the Exeter bench and a witness from Dartmoor:

Witness. Thof the doctor komm'd wei the trade (medicine), but a kudn' zee'n vur the pillem.

Judge. Pillem, man! What d'ye mean by pillem?

Witness. Lor! Not knaw what pillem be? Why, pillem be mucks a drow'd.

Judge. Mucks a drow'd! What's that?

The man lifted up his hands, astounded at his lordship's ignorance, which he thus helped to enlighten: "Why, mucks be pillem a wet!"

Once, when sitting on the bench, I noted down more than twenty obsolete words from the evidence of a single shepherd on a case of sheep-stealing.

But again looking back over two generations, I know not how order was preserved or authority maintained. I never heard of police, constable, nor watchman. Crimes were committed with which the devil—he has not yet disappeared from our indictments—or the witch—who is still a living existence in Devonshire—had always something to do. Yet everybody trusted everybody, and the doors of the houses were seldom locked or bolted by day or by night. Sheep-stealing was a common offence; hanging followed as a matter of course; and at every assize men suffered for it at the Exeter "new drop." Here the farmers combined their detective operations with infinite zeal, and were delighted to help one another's servants to the gallows which they had so well "desarved." I recollect seeing a poor wretch hanged, of whom it was given in evidence that his family was in such a state of starvation that they devoured the mutton raw when he brought the sheep into his hovel; but even for him there was no pity or sympathy. A farmer returning from market one day, reached Moreton in a most distracted and disordered state, his horse at full gallop, his waistcoat torn open; they said his hair stood on end. He declared that he had been riding quietly on in the dark, when the devil jumped up behind him, seized him round the waist, and treated him in the most unbrotherly way. He was reported to have lost his money, and not to have been moderate in his tipple at the inn where he had "put up;" but nobody doubted his veracity, and many new frights and fears accompanied the farmers on their lonesome, gloomy, homeward way. Sometimes a murder took place, generally committed by a stranger, a wandering pedlar, a hanger-on about country fairs, and now and then a woman was convicted of poisoning her husband or killing a child; but there were no newspapers seeking sensational pabulum for their columns, and the surface of the social stream was not much or long rippled by these disturbances.

A stove or grate was a rare luxury then. Stone coal was never seen; charcoal rarely. Turf from the marshes, gorse from the moor, and now and then a wooden log, were the materials of the cottage fires. People generally sat on stools within the chimney-hearth, where the scorching from the blazing furze was sometimes intolerable; but the occupiers of the inner seats—especially in winter-time—were more disposed to put up with the annoyance than to surrender their places. In truth, the vicinity of the moor is often bitterly cold, the snow lies deep, the hail and storm rage furiously. Persons well off in the world ate barley bread, and tea was made of balm or peppermint. A cat and a dog usually formed part of the fireside group. The old men wore scarlet nightcaps, the women mob caps tied under their chins. The labourers took their meals with their masters, but at a respectful distance. The pay of the out-door peasant did not exceed a shilling a day; a hale girl might gain a shilling a week.

The principal sports of the people were Fives played against the church tower, football in the sentry field, and ninepins in the barns. Each had their distinguished representatives, who were becomingly honoured. But bell-ringing seemed the great ambition, for here the contests extended beyond the parochial bounds, and the prowess of the Moretonians was to be contrasted and compared with that of other adjacent belfries. The names of the prize-winners—are they not chronicled in the annals of the past?

Other great men there were few. There was a gentleman rejoicing in the name of *Bragg*, who kept a pack of hounds, but of whom I never heard anything boastful or pretentious; and there were generations of clergymen called *Clacks*, the echoes of whose outpourings were not known to resound beyond the aisles of the church in which they hereditarily ministered.

In the very first house on entering the town of Moreton Hampstead there was a maniac woman, whose screams and howls were heard at a great distance, from a barred window.

> Whence she came, or how she fared,
> Nobody knew and nobody cared.

There were no commissioners of lunacy, no asylums then accessible to the poor, no intrusive inquirers; it was nobody's business. "Every man's house is his castle. Why should I get into trouble for what don't *consarn* me?"

So in the streets there were idiots wandering about. Their names were familiar—such as Crazy Fan and Foolish Bett. They served to amuse the children, who played with them, laughed at them, tormented them; but the older passengers looked on as if they enjoyed, as they sometimes encouraged, the ribaldry of the younger. Benevolence has now directed its solicitude even towards these unfortunates.

Moreton had its celebrities. What town has not? Our school cobbler was a man of mark. His name was Ptolomy; he wrote it Tollomy; but we insisted, and he did not deny it, that he was directly descended from the great astronomer. We discovered in him an innate dignity betokening illustrious ancestry, and while he vigorously beat his leather on his lapstone, he smiled and said that perhaps we might not be far from the truth.

There were two rival barbers, brothers. They neither agreed in politics nor in religion. One was grave, the other gay. They were leading men in their separate factions. One had a singularly emphatic way of laying down the law. It was, "Dip my head, sir, if it is not so!" Had he heard of Sterne's grandiloquent coiffeur? "Dip my wig, sir, in the ocean, not a hair will turn!" But the *whig*gery was on the side of the serious Presbyterian. The other was a jolly churchman.

It is a remarkable circumstance in the religious history of our country, that while the Independents, who in the time of the Commonwealth were the most liberal and the most heterodox of our dissenting sects, have become, in the progress of time, one of the most orthodox and exclusive, the Presbyterians, who were Calvinistic, intolerant and even persecuting, are now the representatives of the most advanced of the Christian creeds. The religion of the staple woollen trade of the west—that professed by the leading merchants and manufacturers—was Unitarianism or Arianism under the Presbyterian name. There were three churches, called meeting-houses — George's, James's, and the Mint—in Exeter, where the great Dissenting schism, which repudiated the doctrines of the Trinity, broke out nearly a century and a half ago, and almost every town in the neighbourhood had its Unitarian chapel, most of which have endowments, due to the prosperity of the now decayed, but then most prosperous, woollen manufacture, under the central patronage of a company holding royal charters as the "Incorporated Guild of Tuckers, Weavers, and Shearmen," who still possess a hall in Exeter. Moreton Hampstead had two such meeting-houses, one called the Presbyterian, the other the Baptist. A vacancy had taken place in the first, and a young man, J. H. B., was elected to fill the post. He determined at the same time to open a school, and I was not displeased when my father told me that I was to return to the old haunts which were very dear to me—to the tors, the moors, and the mountain streams, with which I had become familiar. The first sermon of the new minister was like the outburst of a first love. The text was, "Fulfil ye my joy," and it spoke of links never to be broken. Alas! for human frailty; its name is not always Woman: for within a few short months, "before the shoes were old" which had so glibly mounted the pulpit stairs, "a wider field of usefulness," to say nothing of a larger salary, enticed the faithless one away to Dudley, where he afterwards came to grief, and his history had better be buried in oblivion. But the good people of Moreton were very angry—somewhat bitter in their condemnation. The Baptist congregation was under the care of a gentle Welshman, named Jacob Isaacs. His father may have been Isaac Jacobs, for shiftings and transpositions of christian names and surnames were then, and may still be, a Cambrian usage; but he was not without his renown. He had written a book called The Apiarian, and was very fond of a quiet joke, declaring that he was one of the most ancient of monarchs, being king of the *Hivites*, though their associations with the patriarch Jacob were not of a very creditable character. On grand occasions a cupboard was opened for his guests, and the produce of the hive introduced—honey, mead, metheglin—and he carefully explained the essential differences between the two drinks, which I believe are absolutely the same—the one being the Saxon, the other the Welsh name. However, he insisted that the bee furnished the classical ambrosia and the nectar of the gods, and that neither gourmand nor gourmet could have tasted anything superior to either. Yet, strange to say, though so much of his life and his thoughts were devoted to his bees, they exhibited no affection, no partiality, but much ill will towards him. Instead of a protector and a friend, they deemed him an intruder and a foe, and when he approached his hives, he always covered his hands with gloves and his face with a veil, and did not hesitate to call his subjects unjust and ungrateful. Have bees no more discernment? Have they their preferences and their prejudices? For I have lately seen a bee-master open his hives, take out every separate

comb, lay them on the ground, hunt out the queen, and having discovered her amidst the bustle and the buzz of thousands, restore the combs to the hive, and again close it unstung and unmolested by any of the community.

Our school consisted of eight boarders, all of Unitarian families, of whom Exeter furnished four, Bridport two, and Sidmouth two. One-half of them—the three oldest and the youngest—have been gathered to their fathers. One died lately: Joseph Hounsell, a most lovable and excellent man, to whose memory his fellow-townsmen have erected a laudatory monument. Another, Edmund Butcher, was the son of the author of some of the most beautiful hymns in our language, among which is that beginning—

> Stand still, refulgent orb of day,
> A Jewish hero cries,
> So shall at last an angel say,
> And tear it from the skies.
> A flame, intenser than the sun,
> Will melt the golden urn.

The school was not without its recommendations, but the teaching was carried on at one house, while we were domiciled and were fed (under contract) at another. But unfortunately our master fell in love with the daughter of the Apiarian. She was no favourite, and the rude rustics sometimes inquired of the enamoured minister, "How'z Miss Saucer-eyes?" I remember a dreadful burst of indignation when one of his own congregation put to him the question; but the "love-affair" did undoubtedly tend to the neglect of the duties of the school. The boys were hypercritical; on one occasion, when the master did not make his appearance at the proper time, they blackened all the desks with ink, and when he entered and inquired what it meant, a boy had the boldness, the effrontery, to say: "They have gone into mourning for your absence, sir!" Another time a still graver practical joke gave a more emphatic lesson to the teacher. He was, as usual, non inventus—"gone a courting." Under the schoolroom was a cellar, to which you descended by a dark steep flight of stairs. In the centre was a pump, used to supply the wants of the house, and in one corner a heap of coals for winter use. To the cellar the boys retreated. They cut off the two bottom steps, and pumped and pumped till there was a foot or two of water in the cellar. They then ensconced themselves on the coal-heap, and waited for the master's return. He came at last: it was night; found the school vacant, and, hearing a noise below, seized a candle and dashed down the staircase; he of course fell face foremost into the water, which was thoroughly saturated with coal-dust. The candle was extinguished; the boys escaped in the darkness, and left their drenched, disordered, and dismayed master to recover himself and reach the upper regions as best he could. He had his revenge, as far as a good flogging of the whole school could give it, but I thought the boys almost enjoyed the castigation, and consoled themselves with having had the best of the sport.

How are discipline and dignity lost in schools! Mainly by want of firmness and truthfulness. Respect always, affection generally, must connect the scholar with the teacher. One more example in illustration—it may be traced to the blindness of love.

We were accustomed, accompanied by our master, to take country walks, and those walks had rare attractions. The beauty and brightness of the Devonian rivers, of which the pebbly Teign was in our immediate neighbourhood; the charms of tracing the brooks and streamlets to their sources in the hills; the wild woodland scenery; the cascades, of which one of the most picturesque is that of Beckyfall, reached through the pretty village of Manaton; the many cromlechs and dolmens, with their Druidical associations; the lofty tors; the granite boulders which seem to girdle the edges of the moor; Cranbrook and its supposed Roman intrenchment; ruined bridges; perilous fords; mountain passes, known to local but not to general fame: all in turn were visited—those afar on our half-holidays—those near in our every-day rambles. One afternoon the master led us off for a long excursion. When about a mile from the town, he told us that he had slipped over a stone, had seriously sprained his ankle, must return home without delay to seek some appliance for the mitigation of his suffering; and, having strictly enjoined us to return over the same road by which we had come, he left us, limping and with an expression of sore anguish on his countenance. What evil genius tempted us to disobedience I know not, but fearing no betrayal and no discovery, we circumambulated the road to enter it by the very opposite end to that through which we had made our sortie, when, coming near a stile, we heard the words, "Humid seal of soft affection!" and saw—O strange and perplexing discovery, equally so to him and to us,—saw our late-disabled master with his arm round the waist of his beloved, reading to her, with touching emphasis, the final lines of Rogers's charming song:

> Love's first snowdrop—virgin kiss!

There was more blushing than kissing on that memorable occasion. We received no reprimand for our aberrations. Our sin was covered, if not by charity, by condonation. Our master, in fact, was at our mercy.

And yet I never think of those meannesses without a certain sneaking fondness for the man. I remember the encouragement he gave me when, in an essay on Death, he found the line, "Monarchs must die as well as meaner men." I had pilfered the phrase from a book I had been reading; but though I was half ashamed of the undeserved praise, I had not courage enough to own the plagiarism. But I do remember how one of the boys was put to open shame when, after receiving enthusiastic eulogiums for an autograph MS. poem on orchard robbery, which he read vehemently as

his own, the printed original was discovered, with one only variation, that apples had been introduced instead of pears.

WILL YOU TAKE MADEIRA?

Stretching out my hand in a desultory manner the other morning towards a mass of periodicals which lay on the table beside me, I was attracted by the title of a paper in one of the Reviews, on The Dangers of Madeira. Having passed five months during the winter and spring '63-64 in that island, my curiosity and interest were awakened, and I turned eagerly to the page indicated. I must confess, the title in no way prepared me for the contents. My experience led me to believe that the chief dangers of Madeira consisted in the risks incurred by break-neck expeditions on steep and stony mountains, or difficult landings and embarkings from pitching and tossing steamers, in the unsheltered little bay we accept as an apology for a harbour. I had yet to learn that the island of Madeira was dangerous because the medical profession in England "heedlessly" and "recklessly" send their patients, and the resident practitioners "attract" them thither, through "a professional system of puffing," founded on self-interest.

That there are physicians who are both superficial and mercenary, I doubt not; but my own experience, and the evidence of competent witnesses, have inclined me to believe that the leading characteristics of the class (so far as the characteristics of any one class may be admitted) are skill, devotion, and charity. Most assuredly a residence in Madeira has confirmed me in this belief, as, in so confined a space, it is difficult to hide good works, however willingly the right hand that effected them would do so. That there are some cases of pulmonary disease to which the climate of Madeira is unfavourable, I have heard asserted over and over again by medical men; but that physicians are not to be found in England who have made climate their especial study, and that there are none sufficiently disinterested in Madeira to let the patient stay, or go, without reference to their own pockets, I stoutly deny. Also, from personal experience and observation, that the healthy subject becomes enfeebled and depressed, although, like all other climates, that of Madeira is suitable to some constitutions and unsuitable to others. That Madeira is six hundred miles distant from Europe at the nearest point, I take for granted, as my globe and quadrant are not at hand; that the invalid—above all, the hypochondriacal invalid — who contemplates passing a winter there, should bear this in mind, and several other stubborn facts contingent on this one fact—such as the scarcity of posts, the intervals that must elapse between the arrival of the Times, the Morning Post, and other periodicals—I am willing to admit, although, having carefully studied my Postal Guide before my departure, I was not unprepared for the conditions. But that there is "no society," "no public questions to discuss," that all is "stagnation," once more I enter my protest against such assertions.

So far, indeed, from nothing being heard of the "public questions of the day," the American war, for instance, the gentlemen in our quinta* heard the latest news from North and South on board a Federal and a Confederate ship the same day; and their pugnacious propensities were greatly excited by the prospect of a bonâ fide fight between the Florida and the St. Louis men-of-war, through the best telescopes in their possession.

Lengthened questions of a pecuniary nature would be misplaced here. Every kind of habitation is let by the season. The traveller, on alighting at hotel or boarding-house, is allowed a week to make up his mind whether he will remain there, or go away. Ten pounds a head per month with bedroom and general sitting-room, an extra charge for private ditto of from three to five pounds—these are the hotel terms. Private houses vary from fifty to one hundred and fifty pounds for the season; Payne or Wilkinson, the principal tradesmen, will provide everything, servants, food, &c. (linen and plate excepted), at the rate of twenty-five pounds per month for two persons; one child not counting. Hire of horse, hammock, or bullock-car (an English invention), fifteen-pence per hour. Custom-house duties are enormously high. The traveller should, as far as possible, take all requisite clothing with him. The writer of the article I complain of gives us his experience of a tedious, wearisome day in Madeira; we will make a few annotations thereon. The physician visits you early, makes observations on your health, and probably reports on that of your friends and acquaintance. One might imagine this a subject not devoid of interest to those who have travelled so far in search of health; although in what we might term a sick colony, it is not likely to form a cheerful topic. Whether it might prove profitable in any degree, to consider the changes and chances that surround you, and the noble instances of skill and sympathy and warm human love which "sorrow, sickness, and death" daily and hourly elicit, is a grave question; perhaps it may be considered an impertinent one.

To proceed. You come down to, or after breakfast, and if you reside in a quinta (although the name of the month may be December) you find the windows open to the ground, the air fragrant within and without; the girls have brought down baskets full of violets and wood strawberries from the mountains, and the invalid steps by the side of his healthy companion into the garden, or, if he be unable to do so, his chair or hammock is settled for him in a sheltered nook, to breathe the air, to inhale the perfume, to read or converse with his fellows. Even if suffering, or at best languid, he finds himself doing more or less as others do; neither cruelly cut off, nor excommunicated (as is necessarily the

* Villa.

case in a chilly northern climate), not only from the pursuits and occupations, but often from the society of his healthy associates. This, in my opinion, is one of the many advantages of Madeira to the invalid. "About mid-day," the writer goes on to say, "you proceed in your hammock to the Commercial Rooms." That de-depends mainly on the orders you give your bearers; you might bid them carry you up a winding road between hedges of sweet geraniums and thickets of cacti, under arches that connect rival gardens, golden with the hanging branches of bignonia, or purple with the regal blossoms of the Bougainvillœas, to a spot as sheltered as your own verandah, and there you may read or listen (if fortunate enough to have a companion) to something more genial than "the conversation of Brown, Jones, and Robinson." We take it for granted we are speaking to a traveller who has provided himself with a few books for his edification in "exile." More especially as we are told, that conversation turns on the same melancholy subject which your physician exhausted in the morning. Although, be it remembered, in Madeira there is a daily struggle for life going forward, and it is no more surprising that the results should be discussed, than that soldiers should count up the numbers of those who fall, and who survive, in a military campaign. The question naturally arises, Why repair to the reading-room at all? The joys of a small reading-room in any small place appear to us problematical, even in that island we proudly call our home. At all events, this daily visit is optional. "The same two miles of level ground," although the view it commands is ever varying, ever new, must, we should conceive, become wearisome on the one hundred and tenth repetition of the ride; but, as a good canter is usually the chief reason adduced for frequenting the new road, I should advise the invalid who is restricted to a foot's pace, to turn his horse's head up one or other of the innumerable roads which intersect Madeira, and I promise him that every new point of view, will offer some new and startling feature of picturesque beauty.

The nights are balmy, the sky usually so clear, that the heavenly bodies gain in apparent size and brilliancy. It is true that the invalid is usually ordered home a little before sunset, and of course if he be so unfortunate as to have contracted no domestic ties before, or formed no friendships since his arrival, his evening will be solitary, as it would be in any other latitude —with this difference, that in Madeira (on most evenings) his chair may be placed within reach of the open window, where the breath of the night-smelling flowers is laden with soft messages from the sweet season, even on the vigil of the holy Christmas festival.

The town of Funchal is squalid and poverty-stricken. Beggars abound, and lepers are indeed plentiful; but if the invalid be too hypochondriacal to bear such sights, let him turn his horse's hoofs, or his bearers' steps, away from the town altogether.

And now I would be allowed a few words on the subject of hired horses, which the article calls "miserable hacks from the livery-stables at Lisbon"—where it happens that there are no livery-stables. In the quinta where I resided there were several Englishmen, good judges of horses; and although we changed our hacks once or twice before we were suited, yet at the expiration of a very short period our stable boasted a very (for hired horses) fair stud. As to the hammock, naturally this is a matter of opinion, whether as a means of transport it be tedious and wearisome, or luxurious.

But to proceed to the meteorological and scientific observations adduced by the writer, who appears to regard the late Dr. Mason as the only reliable authority respecting the climate of the place. He talks of personal abuse and futile objections, as the only answers vouchsafed to Mason's statements. The critical remarks I have met with on the subject, tend to show what the doctor himself wished to be clearly understood — that the results of his hygrometrical observations, the principal point at issue, cannot be regarded as applicable to Funchal in general, but only to the locality where they were made. For information respecting this locality, I would refer the writer of the article, and my readers, to a very able pamphlet on the climate of the island, by James Mackenzie Bloxam, who, be it observed is neither a "principal tradesman," nor a "professional puffer." In this essay, Dr. Mason's inferences are discussed and reduced to their true value in a calm and philosophical spirit, worthy of imitation. For our present purpose it suffices to state, that it is fully proved that Mason's hygrometrical results most certainly do not apply to the parts of Funchal, or the class of tenements, in which invalids are now recommended to reside. Dr. Mason's observations were made in 1835, and since the posthumous publication of his book in 1850, many able men have been at work, the result of whose labours may be found in White's excellent guide-book, and the well-known works of Barral, and Mittermaier. None of these writers deny that the climate of Madeira belongs to the moist section, but they fully prove Dr. Mason's inferences as to its extreme humidity, to be overrated. The author of the article, in a paragraph nearly copied word for word from the same source, speaks of iron oxydised, of boots and shoes covered with fungus, and of damaged clothes. He gives an extract, showing how Dr. Mason suffered from extreme lassitude, and many other symptoms of malaria, when resident at Funchal; but, from some unaccountable cause, he entirely suppresses the latter part of the paragraph, in which the doctor himself ascribes all this mischief to the existence of the tank in his own garden, and complains that his landlord would not believe that the water which had been kept in it for two months, could possibly become offensive. This is what we should call half evidence. The climate of Madeira is humid; but (let it be clearly understood we

are speaking in general terms, and not of the occasional seasons of heavy rains, and consequent close muggy atmosphere, which visit Madeira in common with all semi-tropical climates) there is none of the danger and discomfort of damp; dampness does not cling to us or to our clothes.

A friend of my own (not an invalid) wrote from the island: "I feel as if I were floating in liquid velvet." Dr. Mason himself says: "It would be difficult to persuade many of the residents that the climate is damp, notwithstanding the instrumental indications of a considerable per-centage of humidity." To this I can bear witness, as I was rather obstinate on this point for some time, and was always feeling my own silk gown or my own hair to corroborate my assertions. Also my own experience goes to prove that in all the various materials of silk, linen, woollen, and velvet that go to furnish a woman's wardrobe, the least sign of damp was never detected; nor was one particle of rust—the medical friend who resided under the same roof, assures me—ever detected on his surgical instruments; although in our respective apartments there were no fire-places, and the windows were left open day and night for five months, with the exception of one or two nights during some heavy rains.

A word more, and we have done. One of the concluding paragraphs in the article speaks in such favourable terms of the hygienic properties of Iceland and Greenland, that we cannot but fancy the writer may be induced to escape "the dangers" of a winter in Madeira, by a visit to one of these countries. If so, we sincerely trust he will favour us with his new experiences, written in a more genial and less hypochondriacal spirit, than that which characterises his notes on the Flower of the Atlantic!

COLONEL AND MRS. CHUTNEY.

IN FIVE CHAPTERS. CHAPTER I.

"It won't do, Wilson," said Mrs. Chutney; "five and nine are fourteen, and seven are twenty-one; the currie powder three shillings, and the chillies three and fourpence. You are eightpence short." And she looked up into the severe functionary's face anxiously.

"Well, 'm," returned the injured cook, "I have lived in the best of families, and kep' the books, and I must say it's discouraging to have insinuations——"

"I am sure, Wilson," interrupted Mrs. Chutney, timidly, "I have no intention of insinuating anything. I am rather nervous this morning. I cannot count up coolly now, for Colonel Chutney will be down directly. I will try again after breakfast. And oh, Wilson, *do* make the toast crisp."

"The toast!" repeated Wilson, in a high key. "Well, 'm, I did think you knew as that's the page's business."

"Oh! it is the page's business? I didn't know," said Mrs. Chutney, slightly humiliated.

"You may go now, Wilson, and take those books with you."

But before Wilson could obey, Colonel Chutney entered and cut off her retreat.

The colonel was accurately attired in a morning suit of dark brown; a fresh-looking, dark-haired, dark-eyed man, with broad shoulders and a powerful frame. A quick frown came and went habitually on his brow, against which was often balanced a smile of some sweetness. A superficial observer would say he was a very energetic person. A deeper insight suggested irritability and preciseness.

He walked silently to the breakfast-table, while Mrs. Chutney rang the bell, and then hastily regulated her writing materials.

"Louisa," began the colonel, portentously, "whose duty is it to attend to my dressing-things, hey?"

"Why, Sophia's, dear. Nothing wrong, I hope?"

"Wrong! When is anything right in this house? There are my boot-hooks on the wrong side of the table again—a second time, by Jove! If I had these lazy vagabonds in the East, egad, I'd give them stick enough. But I was a fool to leave Rudnuggadhar for the misery and neglect of this wretched rat-hole!"

"But, my love, I am sure everyone tries all they can to make you comfortable. Do not talk of that horrid hot place. See how nice and cool——"

"Cool?" repeated the colonel. "I tell you, I never suffered so much from heat in all my life, as I endure in England. Everything is arranged here for winter, and, when a few hot days come, phew! you are melted, scorched, burnt up. Hot clothes, hot streets, hot houses, and, confound it, worse than all, hot beer!"

Disgusted, he seated himself at the breakfast-table.

"Where is that confounded boy? And" (pointing to cook) "what is she doing here?"

Mrs. Wilson, who had been waiting for her turn to come, hastily retreated.

"You see," began Mrs. Chutney, hesitatingly, "I thought I should have time to go over the books with her before you came down, dear."

"Ha! Just your usual way. Everything out of place; everything out of time. There you are, hurrying over your books that require the utmost deliberation, keeping Wilson here while the hall is in disgraceful confusion."

The page entered and set on the breakfast, while the irate colonel continued: "I stumbled over a broom and a mat! a mat *and* a broom, by Jove! as I came down. Lift this," pointing to the cover, and addressing the page. "Ha! bloaters again!"

"But you said you liked bloaters," urged Mrs. Chutney.

"Who said I didn't?" returned her husband, "but the next time I get them twice in the same week, I'll go and breakfast at the club."

The repast now proceeded in peace—that is, silence—for a while, when the page re-entered,

and informed Colonel Chutney that his tailor had waited on him by appointment.

"Show him into the dining-room. I will be with him directly," returned the colonel. "Louisa," he continued, "write a note to Samperton; ask him to come and dine on Thursday, or to fix his own day. We'll get Thompson and Mango, and Mr. and Mrs. Bullion to meet him. Nice woman Mrs. Bullion! Quite a woman of the world; has her wits about her. I would not mind laying long odds that Bullion never stumbles over mats and brooms when *he* comes down to breakfast."

"I wish Tom was in town; he is always so agreeable at dinner," said Mrs. Chutney, wisely ignoring the disparaging conclusion of the colonel's speech.

"Where *is* that scamp of a brother of yours?" asked her husband.

"Oh, he is improving greatly! He has gone out of town somewhere to study; and is so determined to work, that he will not give his address to any one, fearing to be interrupted."

"Ha! he may have other reasons. However, you have finished breakfast, so sit down, write to Samperton, and I will post the note myself." Mrs. Chutney rose obediently, and seated herself at the writing-table. "Don't forget," continued the colonel, "to ask him for an answer."

"Why, of course he will send an answer if——"

"There's no of course in the case," said Colonel Chutney, sharply. "Just write as I tell you;" then turning at the door, he added, "and be sure you write to Deal about that ottoman. It is too big. It is disgraceful!" And he left the room.

Mrs. Chutney dipped her pen in the ink and began. She was a gentle timid woman, and had been early left an orphan to the care of a severe, strong-minded maiden aunt, her father's sister. Although she had a trifling independence, enough to pay for her maintenance and education, her aunt, nevertheless, treated her as if she was the most abject dependent. Her brother, a year or two older than herself, had, for no particular reason, selected medicine as his profession, and was the very type of a medical student. He was a source of constant anxiety to his sister, whose principal comfort lay in the society of her cousin, Mary Holden, a girl about her own age, who was also a ward of the formidable aunt, Miss Barbara Bousfield.

Both these girls had been placed at the respectable establishment of Mrs. and the Misses Monitor by their guardian while yet children. Here they remained for nearly ten years, happy, with the inalienable joy of youth, despite the frowns of Aunt Bousfield, the monotony of school life, and the absence of future prospects; especially for Mary Holden, whose little all did not afford more than enough to pay for her preparation for more mature years, when she had nothing but her own exertions to look to.

Yet so much more depends on character than circumstance, that Mary Holden, the poorer of the cousins, successfully held her own against the formidable aunt; while both Louisa and Tom Bousfield trembled even at the shadow of her coal-scuttle bonnet.

Mrs. Chutney had scarcely finished one of her notes when the door opened, and a young lady entered in bonnet and shawl—a graceful-looking girl, shorter and slighter than Mrs. Chutney, with large dark grey eyes, shaded by black lashes, and brown, wavy, glossy hair, a pert little nose, and a mouth so red-lipped, so arch, so changeable in expression, and parting to show such radiant teeth, that you readily forgave it for being larger than regulation beauty admits. She wore a delicately-tinted summer dress, and a barége shawl draped à la Parisienne. Miss Holden had, by much courage and dexterity, obtained leave to spend the last year in a Parisian "pension," for sundry educational reasons, and that she might, a few months hence, be justified in putting forth, "French acquired on the Continent," as one of her recommendations when commencing the real battle of life. She had now settled as a parlour boarder at the old school; which had the advantage of being in the neighbourhood to her cousin Louisa.

Mrs. Chutney's face brightened as she rose to kiss her visitor.

"Oh, Mary dear! I am so glad to see you! How is it that you are so early?"

"Well, Aunt Barbara called for me this morning," replied Miss Holden, "and hurried me along in her usual rapid style; then she stopped suddenly near this, and exclaimed, 'There, I forgot, I took you out too soon! I don't want you—go see your cousin, and say I will call about luncheon-time.'"

"No matter what reason," said Mrs. Chutney, affectionately; "I think it good if it brings you here."

"What is the matter with you, Louisa?" was Mary's not very relevant reply; "you look as if you were in some kind of trouble."

"Oh! nothing particular, only I am always wrong about something or other, and I fear I shall never be right."

"No, you never will be right as long as you think so, Loo dear. Just believe firmly you are never wrong, and the chances are, that two-thirds of the world will agree with you. You are a dear good soul, worth a dozen of me; but you let every one put you aside. You are always fancying you have staked your last throw. Pooh, love, there is no such thing as a last throw! Life is Fortunatus's purse—while there is life, there is hope."

Mrs. Chutney's reply was interrupted by the colonel's loud voice outside: "No, sir, certainly not! you agreed to fit me, and you have *not* fitted me. A waistcoat! Nothing of the sort, sir. I say it's a bag—a bag, sir. No alterations for me, O no. A new one, or nothing."

"Oh, Mary!" exclaimed Mrs. Chutney, "I have not finished my notes. Speak to him, dear, when he comes in—keep him engaged."

She had hardly re-seated herself when the

colonel entered. "Ah! Mary!" he said, blandly, "blooming and bright as ever! Come, Mary! a kiss—you know we are cousins."

"Ah, you wicked man!" returned Mary, offering her cheek, "when *will* you get rid of your wild soldier ways?"

"Pooh, my dear girl," said the colonel, smoothing his cravat, "I am tamed now—the old pleasant devil is exorcised, and the rover is turned into the slave of the ring—eh, Loo?"

Mrs. Chutney was too busy writing even to pretend to hear.

"There is a large slice of the—a—the gentleman you named—left for all that, colonel," replied Mary. "I saw an old friend of yours, a few days ago—Captain Peake. He came to see a couple of little Indian orphans at Mrs. Monitor's. He had tea in the drawing-room, and," peeping through her fingers, "told *such* tales of you, colonel."

"What the deuce could he tell," returned the colonel, feigning to be a little alarmed. "He knew very little of me, and—ah—oh! I remember Peake, he commanded the Hastings in the second China war."

"Did he? I should not have thought him old enough for that. But Mrs. Monitor will never let you inside the doors again. She thinks you such a dangerous character!"

"Oh, she does?" said the colonel, complaisantly. "Well, once it would not have been easy to keep me out where I wanted to get in. Loo, we must have Peake to dine some day. Have you finished your invitations? for I must be off."

"I shall be ready directly," replied Mrs. Chutney, sealing her notes. "There!"

The colonel took out his glasses to examine the directions. "That's all right," he observed. "I shall send the boy with this one to Deal. Keep Mary to dinner, Loo." And, with a general wave of the hand, Colonel Chutney departed.

"Ah, Mary," exclaimed Mrs. Chutney, "I wish I could manage him as well as you do!"

"Loo dear," returned Mary, laying her hand impressively on Mrs. Chutney's arm, "I have one *e*-normous advantage over you."

"Pray, what is that?"

"I am not his wife. But, Loo, dear, I have not seen you for three days, and have not been able to have a real talk since the morning you left me at Mrs. Bullion's palazzo in Regent's Park, and O, I had such an adventure."

"An adventure?" repeated Mrs. Chutney.

"You shall hear." Her cousin's eyes sparkled with fun and mischief. "I had not sat five minutes before some one was announced by the palazzo valet a name so utterly distorted that I haven't a notion what it is, and there entered a tall, aristocratic, well-dressed, good-looking man."

"A stranger?"

"I never saw him in my life before. After the first greetings he scarcely spoke to the hostess, but addressed himself much too exclusively to me. That did not embarrass me so much; only while uttering common-places he would look tenderly at me!"

"Your fancy, Mary, depend upon it," remarked Mrs. Chutney, gravely.

"Fancy or not, he shortened my visit; and I had hardly walked to the end of Portland-place before I *felt* him coming after me."

"What nonsense!"

"The instinct was a true one," continued Miss Holden, "for presently he was at my side, lifting his hat gracefully, and turning all sorts of compliments. Of course I felt a little frightened. Still I could not resist the fun of it, somehow."

"You surely did not encourage him?"

"To the extent of asking him to be so very kind as to call a cab for me, in order to get rid of him.

"And you *did* get rid of him?"

"Not altogether; for yesterday morning I was returning from Kensington with a book for Miss Monitor, and, when near to the Old Palace, my fashionable admirer suddenly presented himself and addressed me again."

"Mercy, Mary!" cried Mrs. Chutney aghast, "what did he say?"

"Well, nothing worthy of death or bonds; only that I had never been absent from his mind, and all that, you know—the usual formulary. I fear I laughed."

"Oh, Mary!" interrupted Mrs. Chutney, in a distressed tone, "how could you be so imprudent! What will that gentleman think of you?"

"Nonsense, love," returned Miss Mary with a saucy smile, "don't grudge me a little harmless diversion. Remember what a dull life I lead. And this man! Why, I shall never see him again; if I do, trust me to take care of myself. Now put on your bonnet and let us take a stroll in the gardens while the morning is cool."

CHAPTER II.

THE same bright morning which shone upon the gorgeously furnished house in Richmond-gardens, Bayswater, was lending more than ordinary effect to the various costly buhl and marqueterie tables, cabinets, and rich textures displayed in the renowned show-rooms of Messrs. Deal, Board, and Co., upholsterers, Piccadilly.

It was yet too early for any of their distinguished customers to drop in. Mr. Adolphus Deal—who had become the head of the firm on the death of the honest old cabinet-maker his father—had not yet appeared above the visible horizon. He was an exaggerated specimen of the modern fashionable tradesman who incongruously combines the fine gentleman with the eager shopkeeper. He had a profound belief in himself as a man of taste, a man of business, and a man of pleasure.

A few shopmen were dotted about, and a grey-headed old clerk occasionally addressed a remark to them through a pigeon-hole in an enclosed desk where he was shut up like a parrot in a cage.

"Half-past twelve!" he ejaculated, "and no Mr. Deal. It would be better," coming out of his box, his pen behind his ear—"it would be better if he left the concern to Board altogether."

The shopman thus addressed, winked. "Don't

you know where he's gone to? Why, to Richmond-gardens, to be sure, about Colonel Chutney's orders."

"And a pretty hash he has made of them!" the clerk added. "What with false measures, and contradictory orders, the fitting up of Colonel Chutney's house has been more bother than profit."

"Ah!" remarked the shopman, lowering his voice, "that don't matter to Deal. He'd go there every day if he could. Why, when the colonel's wife knocked down the 'leven-guinea vauze here, didn't he pick up the pieces and say it warn't of no consequence? O, he's deadly sweet upon her, he is!" No form of impudence is so thoroughly intense as the assumptions of a certain class of young shopkeepers who see enough of their aristocratic customers to imitate their dress, manners, and external vices—except the insolence of their shopmen, who imitate *them*. The clerk's reflection on his master on the matter took this form: "Well, them 'spectable, smooth, elegant, soft-spoken sort, never has no kind of morals to speak of."

At this moment enter Mr. Adolphus Deal in an exquisitely fresh summer morning costume of light grey, with turned-down collar, a moss rose in his button-hole, a bunch of charms at his watch-chain, and a flaring red and mauve cravat drawn through a massive ring, luxuriant whiskers and moustache of auburn tinge, and unexceptionably small Balmoral boots.

Deal, on removing his hat, passed one hand meditatively through his hair.

"Briggs," he said, "where are those fragments? I mean the pieces of the jar Mrs. Chutney broke the other day?"

"Oh! I sent them to Pasticci, the china-mender, sir, and he says he will make it a real antique now," answered the shopman.

"Ah!" returned Mr. Deal, pensively. "Some one must go to Richmond-gardens about that ottoman. Perhaps, though——"

He was interrupted by an errand-boy, who with much respect handed him a delicately addressed note bearing a crest and monogram. Mr. Deal gazed at it with affected indifference, and finished his sentence before opening it—"Perhaps, though, I had better go myself, Briggs."

His patience could carry him no further, and hastily retiring to a dingy sanctum reserved for the head of the firm, he tore open the envelope, and scarcely could he believe his delighted eyes as they showed him what follows:

"My dear Sir. Knowing your time is much occupied, I venture to ask the pleasure of your company to a quiet dinner here on Thursday next, with some hesitation. If, however, that day is inconvenient, pray name one most suitable to yourself. Excuse my fixing the early hour of six; but you know Colonel Chutney's peculiar habits, and I must study him.

"Yours truly,

"Louisa Chutney.

"23, Richmond-gardens, Monday."

The effect of this simple note upon the susceptible Adolphus was electric. There is no knowing what vagaries his ecstasy may not have prompted him to commit in the presence of his entire establishment, had not a summons suddenly arrived from the largest show-room. A lady had asked to see him, and him alone, declining to transact any business save with the principal. Mr. Deal had to descend from the supreme altitude to which Mrs. Chutney's letter had raised him. In the centre of the apartment he beheld a tall thin elderly lady, destitute of crinoline, attired in a skimpy black silk dress, a bonnet more suited to a museum of defunct fashions than modern wear, a small white shawl, stout walking-shoes tied on the instep, white stockings, and black gloves with long empty finger-ends.

"Hum—ha!" said Miss Bousfield, poking a complicated arm-chair with the large and baggy umbrella, which, together with a steel-rimmed, steel-chained capacious bag, she invariably carried. "What's that?"

"This is a very curious mechanical contrivance," replied Mr. Deal, blandly [the enrapturing thought crossed him, "The angel's aunt!"], but with that assumption of scientific knowledge which high-art salesmen assume. "Only out yesterday, and not yet named. We intend to denominate the chair 'The Loungiensis Multifarium.' You touch this spring, it lowers the back to recline the head. You touch that, and (click) out comes a footstool. Press the other, and an elbow spontaneously projects itself. Here you observe is a——"

"That will do," interrupted Miss Bousfield. "I am neither a cripple nor a lunatic." Mr. Deal bowed. "I want something"—she paused—"something as a present for my niece, Mrs. Chutney."

Every fibre in Deal's frame quivered at the mention of that name. He said, fervently, that the entire resources of his establishment should be placed at Miss Bousfield's command for so delightful an object.

"Of course they will," said Miss Bousfield, tartly, "if I am ready to pay for them. But I don't want any costly rubbish. Show me something sensible for about six pound ten." And she made a short mental calculation of the probable cost of a circular dumb waiter lately presented to her by Colonel Chutney, beyond the value of which she was determined not to advance. Miss Bousfield considered presents as debts, and always paid them at the rate of twenty shillings in the pound.

"Something sensible for six, ten," repeated Mr. Adolphus Deal, thoughtfully.

Here Mr. Deal despatched his men for several inlaid cabinets, buhl work-tables, bronzes, and ormolu ornaments. Miss Bousfield touched each of them dangerously with her umbrella, and Deal did not even wince.

"Pooh! Mere finery! Have you nothing of a teapoy, or a writing thing?" Several such articles were produced. "What's this?" asked Miss Barbara, examining a teapoy.

"The new garde thé—registered," replied an attendant.

"The price!" demanded Miss Bousfield, fiercely.

"Oh, it's a cheap article, madam. Fifteen guineas."

"I don't know guineas. Fifteen pounds fifteen for a toy that would come to pieces in a couple of months near a fire! Nonsense! What is this?" asked Miss Bousfield, nearly overturning a work-table with her umbrella.

"Twenty guineas. I mean twenty-one pounds," replied Deal, examining the ticket.

"Where do you all expect to go to?" exclaimed Miss Bousfield, with sudden energy. "I'd see every stick of furniture in London burning before I would give way to such extortion. Let me out of this." And she made a sudden rush to the door.

"Stop, madam," cried Deal. "Stop, I entreat. We *must* find something for the adorable—I mean the most interesting—object you have in view."

"If you please, sir," said the old clerk, coming out of his desk at this critical moment, "there is a davenport up-stairs, returned by Sir Frederic Samperton after he had had it a week or two, as not solid enough. We might put it at eight guineas."

"Be seated for a moment, madam," entreated Deal. "Here it is," he said, "at your own price."

Miss Bousfield frowned upon the article severely. Her scrutiny was satisfactory. "You know my price; six, ten."

"Then six, ten be it, madam," returned Deal, bowing, and washing his hands in the air.

"Now call a cab, and I will take it away with me," said the customer, counting the money out of her massively-steeled bag.

CHAPTER III.

Mrs. Chutney and Mary Holden had returned from their morning walk, and, having thrown off their bonnets, sat down quietly in the drawing-room to await the colonel's return to luncheon. They had greatly enjoyed the morning's companionship. Mrs. Chutney, timid and confused when flurried by the colonel, always felt support and encouragement from her cousin's fearless spirit and her ready sympathising affection. She held a complicated whity-brown web to which she occasionally added a few stitches with the crochet-needle, while Miss Holden appeared to be reading the Times.

"These have been very happy hours, dear," said Mrs. Chutney, laying down her work, and resting her arm on the table beside her. "I wish you could come oftener."

"You see the day is hardly long enough for all I have to get through," replied Mary. "You know that, like yourself, I have no money; but, unlike you, I have not a rich husband. I suppose you would cut me if I followed my own inclinations?"

"How, dear?" asked Mrs. Chutney.

"Well, I do not fancy the legitimate line for distressed gentlewomen—the meek, ill-treated governess, with some hard-hearted matron for a task-mistress, half a dozen unruly pupils, and a scampish young nobleman making love in the background. Though I should rather like that part of it."

"Mary, Mary! how wildly you talk!" said her gentle cousin.

"No," continued Miss Holden, "I would prefer trying on cloaks at Marshall and Snelgrove's; or, Loo dear, selling tarts at a pastry-cook's in a garrison town. That *would* be jolly!"

Mary was the orphan daughter of a captain in a marching regiment, which may account for some of her eccentric tastes.

"Ah! Mary—a good husband, and a comfortable home!"

"But show me them! You have both, yet there was a brighter smile in your eyes, and a happier repose on your lips, in the old days when we turned our frocks, sponged our silks, washed our ribbons, darned our stockings, and mended our gloves together."

"Don't talk of it," exclaimed Mrs. Chutney. "I seem somehow to have lost my courage. I cannot please my husband—and then, you know, I had no fortune—at least nothing to speak of. I am the creature of his bounty. And I am always afraid of his finding out my mistakes; for I have grown, oh! so stupid."

"My dear," cried Mary, "you are a goose. No money! Hadn't *he* plenty? Did you not give him yourself—your tender true heart. I know you love him. Don't you care for his comforts with a watchfulness no money could purchase or reward? Money is all very necessary, but there are things to which money is dross. I say, Loo, do not be so down-hearted. Just show the colonel your value; contradict his whims, disregard his storms in a teacup; don't give him a kiss when he asks for one."

"But he never does ask for one," said Mrs. Chutney, dejectedly.

"Gracious!" exclaimed Miss Holden, with strong emphasis, "I really thought better of him! But hush! I hear a ring. It may be the colonel. There, I have pulled the tablecloth crooked, and mind you stand up to him like a woman—nothing secures peace like an armed neutrality."

"Well, I'll try," returned her cousin, as Colonel Chutney entered.

"Phew!" he exclaimed, "it's terribly hot. Loo, I want some brandy and soda-water, iced, mind—iced."

Mrs. Chutney rang the bell and gave directions to the page, while the colonel continued addressing Mary: "I see you have been out; too lazy, I suppose, to go up-stairs" (pointing to their bonnets, which lay upon a sofa); "I must say" (with an irritable laugh), "I do not approve of amalgamations—drawing-rooms and dressing-rooms are better kept apart."

"Well, I do not agree with you," said Mary, carelessly; "by mingling two good things you increase the sum total of excellence."

"God bless my soul!" exclaimed the colonel; "Loo, look at that table-cover!"

"Form square, repel cavalry, said Mary, in an emphatic whisper to her cousin.

"What is the matter?" asked Mrs. Chutney, quietly.

"It is crooked—it is infernally crooked. If

there is one thing more than another which shows a total indifference to appearance, a culpable negligence of duty on the part of the mistress of a house, it is a crooked table-cover."

"You had better put it straight, love," said the wife, quietly.

"What do you mean?" cried the exasperated colonel.

Mrs. Chutney laid down her work and half rose. Mary threw herself on her knees and held her down by her dress. Making an imaginary search on the floor, she exclaimed, "You have dropped your thimble." Here the page entered with the desired soda-water.

"Please, 'm, cook says the fishmonger has not sent the ice."

"I knew it. I expected it!" ejaculated the colonel, walking up and down the room; "when was ice producible in this house in proper time—or anything else fit for a gentleman?"

"If I had known," began Mrs. Chutney, apologetically——

"No explanations," whispered Mary; "charge home."

"Go for some ice instantly," continued Mrs. Chutney to the page. "Do not excite yourself, my dear, it will be here directly."

"Why do you not have an ice-house in the garden, colonel?" said Mary, "and then you could cool yourself there sometimes."

The colonel stopped short in the act of wiping his brow, and stood transfixed. Miss Holden laughed, and adroitly changed the subject. "Do you know, colonel, I like your new morning suit immensely. Turn round. Why, Louisa, how could you say it was unbecoming?"

"Did she say so?" asked the colonel anxiously. "You ought to have told me, Loo. What is your objection?"

The colonel surveyed himself in the glass, feeling an uncomfortable sort of uncertainty some mischief was brewing. What if his much-enduring Louisa was going to be rebellious, to object to systematic annihilation, and develop ideas, wants, and wishes of her own! He must seem amiable, to avert such a calamity.

"I have been detained rather longer than I expected, Mary," he began, blandly, "by an interesting visit. You were the topic of a very flattering conversation."

"Dear me," said Miss Holden, "an ambassador to ask the honour of an alliance!"

"Better still, the contracting party himself, I suspect."

"You are not in earnest!" exclaimed Mrs. Chutney.

"It's a fact, though," said the colonel. "I was leaving the club, when Captain Peake came up to me; and, after a little talk about the East, and our mutual acquaintances there, he, in a very manly and straightforward way, stated that he had met you at Mrs. Monitor's: that the esteem in which you were held, the regard shown for you on all sides, had made an impression on him, which——By-the-by, what's for luncheon? for Peake said he would be here at one thirty, and," looking at his watch, "he is due now."

Mary, who had listened in silent astonishment, now broke in: "But, Colonel Chutney, the man must be mad! I never saw him but three times, when he had tea with Mrs. Monitor, and then he stared so, and seemed so nervous, that he made me nervous too. How could you let him come here?"

"You nervous! that's a good joke!" repeated Colonel Chutney; "and as for Peake, he was one of the most courageous fellows in the Indian Navy. I spoke to one or two men in the club about him after he left me, and heard the highest character of him. Why, he was noticed in despatches for a daring rescue of a merchant craft from some piratical Chinese junks in 'fifty-three."

"Pooh!" returned Mary. "There is no great heroism in facing a legion of Chinese. I fancy I could put an army of them to flight myself."

"Oh, Mary!" interrupted Mrs. Chutney in a tone of remonstrance, when the door was thrown open, and the page announced "Captain Peake;" whereupon entered a broad-shouldered, good-looking man, probably forty years of age, with small whiskers and thick drooping black moustache. His complexion and clothes were deep brown, as if sunburnt generally all over; his hands (he wore no gloves, though a brilliant diamond ring sparkled on his little finger) partook of the general tint; he had a broad honest face, with grave dark eyes, a quantity of dark hair, and a sailor-like look.

During luncheon the captain's performances were precisely those of a man painfully in love. He did not say much, and seemed afraid to look up when he did speak. Chutney rallied him so boisterously, that even Mary Holden blushed, and Mrs. Chutney broke in with timid remonstrances. After luncheon the two gentlemen retired to the bow-window, and, entangling themselves in the gorgeous window-curtains, held a whispered conversation. Nothing was overheard but an anxious question from Peake, which seemed to ask "if there was any other fellow in the way?" What this meant could not be guessed; for at this moment the door was opened violently, to admit Miss Barbara Bousfield. "Steady! Mind what you are about," she exclaimed. "Don't scratch the walls or break the banisters;" and she slowly backed into the room, followed by a cab-driver and the page carrying a davenport. They set it down, and a short, sharp, and decisive conflict ensued, ending in the discomfiture of "cabby," and his grumbling departure. Then, and not till then, did Miss Barbara lower her umbrella from its threatening position, and standing at ease, addressed Mrs. Chutney. "There, Louisa, I have brought you a present; so don't say you got nothing from me towards your furnishing. It's a useful concern, not the sort of frippery that is generally made up for women. There—there's a desk to write at; here are drawers to keep your account-books and papers in; here are accounts paid; here unpaid—hope you'll have very few there. I believe there are some secret drawers, too, but you'll not care

about them. Married women should have no secrets." While Aunt Barbara spoke, Colonel and Mrs. Chutney examined the davenport with exclamations of delight. Captain Peake looked on with quiet attention; meanwhile the page entered, unperceived by all save the last-named personage, and delivered a letter to Miss Holden, which she looked at with much attention and curiosity, but still without opening it.

"My dear aunt," exclaimed the colonel, "I am touched; by Jove! I am a good deal affected by your kindness and generosity in making my wife so very handsome a present. I know she shares my sentiments." Shakes hands with Miss Bousfield.

"I am sure, Aunt Barbara, I am greatly obliged," chorused Mrs. Chutney; "and I shall try and keep it very nice and tidy."

"I hope so," said the colonel, more emphatically than hopefully. And, glasses in hand, he proceeded to point out the beauties and usefulness of their acquisition to his wife.

"It looks more like a man's affair, colonel, doesn't it?" said Mary, carelessly.

"What do you mean?" asked Aunt Barbara, fiercely.

"Why, the sort of solid heavy thing that seems to suit a man's chambers."

"I am not offering it to you," said Aunt Barbara, striking her umbrella on the floor. "What business have you with opinions? Wait till you are in a position to uphold them."

"As an intelligent being——" began Miss Mary. "Don't make faces at me, Loo," she continued, in reply to some signals from her cousin. "As an intelligent being, I cannot help forming opinions; and, being blessed with the faculty of speech, I can't resist uttering them. A beneficent Providence may in time lend them weight in the shape of a rich husband, and then, aunty dear, they will be better worth your attention."

Chuckles of delight from Captain Peake.

"I tell you what," returned Miss Bousfield with suppressed anger, "you will come to no such good end. You are too conceited and shallow; but I wash my hands of you. You value neither opinions nor appearances."

While these sentences were exchanged, Mary opened and glanced at her letter, which seemed of no common interest; for she changed colour, put it back in its envelope, and thrust it into the folds of her dress.

"And conceal your letters when you get them—a very suspicious circumstance," continued the aunt, maliciously.

"I have a right to my own letters, free from your interference," replied Mary, with some serious displeasure.

The moment poor Mary got home and found herself alone, she hastily drew forth her letter, and read as follows:

"'Dear little Coz. You have so much courage and judgment, that I am determined to confide a difficult task to your management. I dare not write to Louisa, the tiger would infallibly bone my epistle, and then the d—— to pay, with the usual scarcity of combustibles, so I want you to read this to her, and soon, mind, for I am in an awful fix. About six weeks ago I had an awful run of bad luck—so bad and so long, there was no reasonable probability of its lasting; but being in immediate want of funds, and Louisa very selfishly refusing to apply to Chutney, I was imprudent enough to put Samperton's name to a bill, fully intending, on my honour, to chalk up before it became due.'

"Ah!" groaned Mary half aloud, "he has forged Sir Frederic Samperton's name; what shall we do—what *shall* we do!"

"'Luck has, however, been inexorable,' continued the elegant letter, 'and I could as soon pay the national debt as the fifty pounds I drew for. I have reason to believe that Samperton has the bill. Now Loo must find me the money; I'll repay her, on my word! Let her tell Chutney she has a milliner's bill, or something, to pay. Then she must see Samperton and give him the money—women can do these things so well! Above all, do not let proceedings be undertaken against me, which would be utter ruin. I swear, if you both help me now, I'll reform; if not, I'll cut my throat, and you'll all be disgraced by a coroner's inquest. Your affectionate cousin, "'Tom Bousfield.

"'P.S.—Look sharp! No time to be lost! Write to Y. Z., Post-office, Radcliffe-highway.'

"No time to be lost," thought Mary, sinking down on the sofa in bewildered despair, and striving to think. "What shall I do? Torment my poor dear Loo? No! she shall not know a word of it. She has stood by me many a time—many a weary hour she has comforted me—and I am the strongest, too. Where, where shall I turn? Aunt Barbara is out of the question. Perhaps Sir Frederic Samperton would give him time. But who will ask him? I might go myself and entreat him. Why should I fear? Sir Frederic has some humanity about him. Fifty pounds! what a deal of money! Oh, what an odious, selfish, weak creature a 'gay young man is'—'a good fellow,' as his companions call him."

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AT THE BAR.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "A CRUISE UPON WHEELS," &c. &c.

CHAPTER I. FAR AWAY.

THE marriage of Gilbert Penmore with Gabrielle Descartes was certainly an imprudent one, and threatened, at the time of the opening of this story, to turn out very ill for both the one and the other.

Gilbert Penmore was the youngest son of his Excellency Thomas Gilbert Penmore, who, in consideration of great losses incurred at the time of that swift depreciation in West Indian property, by which so many unoffending persons were suddenly reduced to comparative poverty, was entrusted by the Colonial Office with the governorship of one of our West Indian Islands. Soon after the birth of his youngest boy, Mr. Penmore had the misfortune to lose his wife, and then it was that he determined upon keeping his last-born son and one daughter with him in the West Indies, while he sent his other children to be educated in England. Our governor's appointment was not a good one, and the facilities for educating children in the West Indies are but few, so that when it was proposed to him by his old friend and distant connexion, Monsieur Descartes, who was governor of one of the French West Indian Islands, that the boy Gilbert should be sent over to be brought up along with his own sons, Mr. Penmore determined, though much against his will, to let the lad go, and kept only his daughter, to be his little housekeeper and companion. "The boy will have an opportunity of getting instruction, which it would be impossible for me to afford him," Mr. Penmore said to himself; "and he will pick up a knowledge of French into the bargain." And he did pick up a knowledge of French with a vengeance, as will be hereafter seen.

The family of Monsieur and Madame Descartes consisted of two boys and a girl, and their education was conducted, in the first instance, by a governess, and subsequently by a learned young Frenchman, whom M. Descartes caused to be exported from St. Omer, and who was ready to make himself useful, partly as secretary to the governor, and partly as tutor to his children. These boys of M. Descartes were stupid idle lads enough, and it was partly perhaps with a view of stimulating them to exertion, that the French governor had proposed that young Penmore should be associated with them in their studies. The lads, however, were not to be dealt with so easily, and were more ready to avail themselves of their young friend's good example in their hours of play, than in those devoted to study. Gilbert himself was an industrious youngster enough, and very often had to prepare his companions' lessons as well as his own.

I have spoken of Mademoiselle Gabrielle, the daughter of Governor Descartes, as being associated with her brothers in their studies, and, indeed, to a considerable extent this was the case, nor is it necessary to conceal the fact, that in many branches of education this young lady managed quite to outdo her indolent brothers, and almost to keep pace with Gilbert himself. Between these two, as might rationally be expected, a wonderful attachment was not long in springing up. They were continually together. They helped each other with their lessons, and when these were over, and the time came for such play as the climate permitted, or for an evening ramble by the sea-shore, Mademoiselle Gabrielle was sure to be of the party. Nobody interfered much with the young lady's liberty. Her papa was always busy with his duties as governor, and her mamma was simply a fine lady, a petite maîtresse, who was ready to depute the care of her family to anybody who would mercifully relieve her of it. In the time of the governess our young lady was certainly more looked after, but when that lady was superseded by the ex-pensioner of St. Omer, Mademoiselle Gabrielle was left pretty much to her own devices and to the following of her own instincts.

Luckily, these were in the main excellent. She had inherited her father's rather than her mother's nature, and Governor Descartes was as fine a gentleman, and as good a fellow into the bargain, as ever governed an island, Sancho Panza himself not excluded. He was impulsive and affectionate, with rather a warm temper, and a very warm heart. And in these qualities his daughter certainly took after him. Both of them were sound in the great things, and if the governor was a little irritable at times when his liver was affected, and if Mademoiselle Gabrielle was during the earlier years of her life a bit of a tom-boy, there was not much harm done after all. She was not what would be called a pretty child. She was thin and sallow, this last quality being, perhaps, the effect of the climate, but there was a certain innocence and unworldliness

about her expression, which through all the changes which her face underwent, as she grew from a child to a girl, and from a girl to an almost woman, never left her. She was six years old, and Gilbert was eight, when they first plighted their troths to each other, and when the two grew to be sixteen and eighteen respectively, they had in no respect wearied of each other's society. How those ten years were passed I have not time to tell. I wish I had. The life of that boy and girl on that West Indian Island, had something of Paul and Virginia about it which it would be very pleasant to follow, did not the main incidents of my story, to be hereafter developed, demand all the space I have at command.

Of course it is unnecessary to say that during this period of ten years the intercourse between these young people was from time to time suspended. Gilbert's father would send for him at intervals for the pleasure of having the lad by him, and giving him a holiday, as he called it. I am afraid that Gilbert's real holiday—though he was warmly attached to both his father and sister—was rather spent at school—such school as was kept by the ex-student of St. Omer, in the house of Governor Descartes.

It was on the occasion of one of these visits to his father that Gilbert, not knowing exactly what to do with himself, and being a boy always eager for information, got hold of certain English law books, of which his father had a good collection, to help him in the duties of his office, and settling himself down with his head in his hands, began to pore over the volumes by the hour together. And he had two reasons for thus proceeding. First, a wish to *improve himself in the English language;* and next, very soon after he had made the first plunge into law, the science and logic of the thing began to exercise such an influence over him—he being now a lad of some sixteen years' standing—that he could not abandon the study he had voluntarily taken up without something of an effort.

It has been said above that he wanted first to improve himself in the English language, and this brings me to an announcement of a rather startling nature, which will be found to affect our hero's career not a little. Gilbert Penmore, though of English birth, having been brought up almost entirely among French people, and in a French colony, had attained to a most perfect knowledge of the French language, and in doing so had to some extent let go his own. In his occasional visits to his home this had of course been frequently observed and laughed at, but as the boy grew up to be about the age I have spoken of, the joke began to be rather too good an one, and his mistakes and his accent began so much to distress his father, that the worthy gentleman at last spoke seriously to his son upon the subject, and entreated him to remember how much it might stand in his way in life if he, an Englishman, was found to be imperfectly acquainted with his own language. "A language," the worthy gentleman added, "as superior to the other as light is to darkness—a language which can deal with the highest subjects as well as the most trivial—a language into which even the Bible may be, as it has been, fitly translated, and which, being capable of the dignity of blank verse, can give us when we require it poetic dialogue free from the French jingle of perpetual rhymes." Gilbert promised in the vilest English that he would remember this hint and act upon it, and going back to "school," talked French incessantly for six months.

It was soon after this time that an incident occurred which wrought a great change in our youngster's life. His little friend and playfellow fell very sick of a fever such as abound in those climates, and though she recovered from it ultimately, the medical authorities pronounced it indispensably necessary that she should at once be sent off to Europe for the more complete restoration of her health. There may have been, and I believe there was, another reason for this journey. Madame Descartes, who had neglected her children while they *were* children, now that her daughter was growing up began to take some interest in her welfare, and, more especially being a very worldly woman, to feel a strong wish that the future of her daughter might be a brilliant one. It began then to strike her that the growing intimacy between Gabrielle and young Penmore, a lad of eighteen, not even started yet in life, could hardly lead to the fulfilment of her ambition, and this proposal of the doctor's that the invalid girl should travel to Europe without delay, met with the greater approval of Madame Descartes, because she felt that it would, at all events, be the means of separating her daughter from this young man, who, at this time, certainly did seem to be anything but the kind of person who could ensure a prosperous future to Mademoiselle Gabrielle Descartes.

The news that Gabrielle was going away descended upon poor Gilbert like a thunderclap. The continual intercourse between the two, which had now lasted so long, had got to be regarded by both as a thing of course, and which was never to be interrupted. Indeed, the despair of the two young people was so little to be hidden, that Madame lost no time in hurrying her daughter's departure. This, however, was not accomplished till after the lovers had effected a stolen meeting, and had, not without many tears, once more renewed that pledge which they had given to each other when a couple of children. What else were they now? What did they know of the world? What of life, and its difficulties, and necessities? Heaven help them, that knowledge was all to come.

The parting between the lovers took place some little time before that of Gabrielle's departure, for Gilbert was now to go back to his father for a time, having reached an age when it was necessary that he should begin to think how he was to spend the long life which, humanly speaking, lay before him.

It was not long after Gilbert's return to his

father's roof that the news reached him that Mademoiselle Gabrielle had started for Europe, under the care of an English lady who was a very old friend and schoolfellow of Madame Descartes, and who had undertaken the charge of the young girl for the next few years. During that time she was to live in England.

I believe that never once from the time of that parting which has just been alluded to between the lovers, did young Penmore for one moment doubt that Gabrielle was to be his wife. On this subject his mind was tolerably tranquil. That thing was to be. The only thing to be done now was to bring it about as soon as possible. And that meant work. Gilbert's father, with his family to provide for, and his means comparatively small when the expenses of his position are considered, could do nothing for him pecuniarily. The young man himself had a very small sum left him by his mother, and which was to come to him on his majority, but it was rather a sum which might help him to make a start in life than a fortune to be looked to as a source of income. It was necessary, then, that he should adopt some profession without delay, and embark himself in it as soon as possible.

And now there came to him the remembrance of those books on law which he had found in his father's library, and to these he returned with a purpose, studying them with a degree of success which seemed to show that he really had some aptitude for the acquirement of this particular branch of knowledge. No doubt it was because those books came in his way that he took up with the study of the law, but how many illustrious persons have there not been whose choice of a profession has been influenced —and with the best results—by what came in their way at the critical period of passing from boyhood to man's estate.

The small collection of books on legal subjects in Governor Penmore's library, and such others on the same topic as were to be obtained on the island, were in due time exhausted, and our young gentleman being still bent on becoming Lord Chancellor, it was at length decided that Gilbert should set sail for the mother country, to be entered at one of the Inns of Court, and to prosecute his studies under professional guidance. His father could get him a free passage to England, and would provide the fees which would be required for his entrance at Lincoln's Inn and his education in barristers' chambers. More than this he could not do, and it was arranged that, till he came of age, Gilbert should live on money borrowed on the sum left him by his mother, and afterwards on the money itself, till such time as he should be in the receipt of a professional income. "Not long," Gilbert thought, poor fellow.

At last a certain night came when the lad found himself actually standing upon the deck of an English man-of-war bound for home, and as he stood with his hand upon the bulwark in the still, tropical night, he gazed with fixed eyes into the darkness before him like one who would fain see his destiny in the future. "I will do great things," he said; "I will go more and more deeply into this calling, which to me seems so fascinating. I will undertake some great defence, which I will conduct so as to become celebrated everywhere. I will rise to be Lord Chancellor, and Gabrielle shall be my wife to cheer and help me through it all."

CHAPTER II. AT HOME.

Two young people are sitting at breakfast in a small room in a house in the suburbs of London. They are rather an odd-looking couple, and, curiously enough—though this does sometimes happen with married people—they are rather alike. Both are sallow, both have large dark eyes and dark hair, both incline to be thin, and both, but especially the lady, talk English with a slight accent. This, however, will not be reproduced here; nor, indeed, could the thing be done, as their knowledge of the language in which they are conversing is too perfect to permit of their making mistakes in the choice of words, or in grammar, and is, in fact, a matter only of tone and accent.

The breakfast would appear to be of anything but a luxurious sort. Part of a stale loaf, some pieces of dry toast, and the débris of an egg, decorate the table, which is covered with a rather dirty tablecloth.

I have said that these young people were sallow, and dark, and thin, but I shall have chosen my words very ill if I have conveyed the impression that they were either ill favoured or sickly. Both were straight and well grown, and the man gave good evidence of that kind of wiriness which is so superior to mere fleshy strength. So with his face. It was nervous, lively, intelligent, but it was not what would be called handsome. His expression was somewhat of an anxious kind, perhaps a little unhappy, but when he addressed the lady opposite to him it lit up directly, and was singularly pleasant to see.

I have said that between the man and his wife there was a certain resemblance, and I have spoken of their being both of a sallow complexion, but I believe that with regard to the lady, at any rate, I have chosen the word ill. I ought rather to have said that her complexion bore evidence of her having been born in a climate where the sun is less merciful than in these temperate regions. But it was a clear and healthy colour, and her eyes, which were grey, said nothing of illness or languor. They were a very young couple; the husband did not appear to be more than two or three and twenty, and the wife was two or three years younger.

At the time of this their introduction to the reader, it appeared that the two were sitting in solemn conclave over a letter which lay on the table before them, and the contents of which appeared rather to have puzzled them.

"You see we must do something," said the young man. "That money left me by my poor

mother is nearly gone, and what I can make by writing for newspapers and law magazines is certainly not enough for the expenses of even this small establishment."

"And the attorneys?" said the lady, who was, indeed, none other than our former friend Gabrielle Descartes, only we must now call her Gabrielle Penmore. "Those cruel wicked attorneys! Are they still as little ready to help you as ever?"

"I might as well never have been 'called,' for anything I can get to do from them."

"The wretches!"

"Gabrielle, they actually laugh at my foreign accent, and say that so ridiculous an idea was never heard of as a man getting up in a court of law and pleading in doubtful English."

"My poor Gilbert, what are we to do? Such a life as you lead, you ought to succeed. You are always working and striving, and you have no enjoyments, and such poor clothes, and—oh, Gilbert, you are not sorry that you married me?"

"Sorry! Well, in one respect. I am sorry for having brought you into such a scrape."

"We shall get out of it yet. Look here, Gilbert, suppose I commit some crime, and then get you to defend me. I will, if you like."

They both laughed heartily at this idea. Then they came back to the original subject which had been under discussion—the letter.

"It is curious," said Gabrielle, "this proposal of your cousin's to come and live with us arriving just at this moment. It would help us very much, no doubt. What sort of a person is she, Gilbert?"

"I hardly know. I have heard my father say that she is excessively vain, and rather spiteful."

"Oh, Gilbert."

"Her father and my mother were first cousins, so she and I are what lawyers call first cousins once removed. I have only seen her once, and I found her to be very much my senior—ten or a dozen years, I should say—very carefully made up, though, and with some pretension to good looks. She told me that I had inherited personally all the defects of both my parents, and none of their beauties."

"What a dreadful woman."

"I don't think you could stand it, Gabrielle."

"Yes, but I intend to stand it. Look here, Gilbert, we have got our way, and are married, and together, which was what we wanted, and which is a thing that few people attain to so soon. Surely it would be very wrong for us to complain and grumble at this small inconvenience. You say she's very well off, so with what she contributes we shall get on better in our housekeeping, and then you'll be able to have all sorts of comforts, and——"

Her husband tried to interrupt her, but she went on.

"—and so shall I. And you won't have to slave so hard, and you can devote yourself more to law, which you like. And then you'll be more in court and ready for anything that might come in your way. And you'll get a chance, and we shall become illustrious, and live happy ever afterwards."

Yes, they were married. That boy and girl attachment of the West Indian Island had come to something at last. Gilbert Penmore was not long—after he had once set foot on English ground—in finding out his old playfellow, and as every possible obstacle that could be devised was put in the way of their intercourse—by the special stipulation of Madame Descartes, extending at last to an order consigning the young lady to the care of an aunt living at Paris—it came to pass that the young people took their own way out of the difficulty, and on the very day previous to that on which Gabrielle was to have started for Paris were united by banns in the parish church of St. Benet Fink, in the City of London—the bridegroom having taken care to occupy lodgings in that parish for a good three weeks beforehand.

It was wrong, no doubt. It was a clandestine act. They were flying in the face of parents and friends. They were wanting in patience, and truthfulness, and prudence. They did wrong—and they suffered for it, as is commonly the case.

They were very poor. Poor enough to have to undergo many privations. Their poverty was always staring them in the face, and meeting them at every turn. Then they were living upon their capital, such as it was. It was very little now, and getting less every day. There was a source of misery and anxiety at once. To know that their little store was continually diminishing, and to be mainly ignorant how it was to be replenished.

The gaps and apertures in that small income were not replenished, they were only patched and gagged for a time by all that poor Gilbert Penmore could do. After he was called, he sat in his place in court day after day, the picture of hope deferred. He knew that he was a lawyer, that he had worked harder at law, and studied its intricacies with greater perseverance, than half the men whom he saw strutting into court with their briefs conspicuous in their hands. He knew that they were often shallow and unsound in their arguments, superficial in their apparent eloquence, brazen in their insolence, and wrong in their facts, and yet, such is the benumbing influence of non-success, that he had at times to summon all the man within him not to feel cowed before these men who he knew were his inferiors. Still he worked harder and harder. He watched the course of every case, noted its peculiarities, observed what precedents were quoted in connexion with its details, and laid up precious matter for his own future guidance. He never gave in. Sometimes, indeed, it did seem rather hard to him that he *never* got a chance, that he was never employed as a junior to get up the particulars of a case, or that when a prisoner on circuit was undefended, the judge would never catch his anxiously

expectant eye, and say, "Mr. Penmore, will *you* have the kindness to watch the case for the prisoner."

And then, his wretched day in court over, there was hard, hard work to be done afterwards, hard writing on law questions, hard newspaper work on subjects of the day, and (perhaps hardest of all to a fastidious man) the struggle to be amusing, to produce what is called "light literature," articles for magazines and periodicals, demanding new choice of subjects, and new ideas continually. Nor were his labours always crowned with success even in these departments of literature. Sometimes, when he had prepared a newspaper article on a subject which he thought a good one, he would be told that it was just a day too late, or that it was not a matter which the editor thought it safe to interfere with. Or the magazine would send him back his "light literature," with a bewildering announcement that it was exceedingly good, but "not suitable" for publication in that periodical. All these are mishaps which most literary men have to go through at first, but they get through them when they are single men, and such failures are not very destructive, but in this present case every such misadventure was a serious loss, and Penmore would often find it very hard work to possess his soul in patience when so severely tried.

As to getting any assistance from friends or relatives, the thing was impossible. Governor Penmore could do nothing for his son beyond writing to his solicitor to introduce Gilbert as a young barrister seeking employment; while as to Gabrielle's relations, her mother had declined all intercourse with her from the moment of her contracting a marriage so entirely opposed to her views, and her father was so afraid of his wife that he could only send her a present now and then, abstracted, as it were, from his own income with the greatest difficulty, for Madame kept a rigid eye on all her husband's pecuniary doings, and required so much for her own expenditure in dress and luxury, that it was with the greatest difficulty that the poor governor could manage to get hold of a few pounds at rare intervals to send to his dear Gabrielle. Gilbert, for his part, did not take much by that introduction to the solicitor. Mr. Brickdale was a cautious and entirely conventional old gentleman, and Penmore's accent and queer yellow complexion under the white barrister's wig made him quail before the idea of putting a case into his hands.

There was one good thing, however, got out of this connexion. Mr. Brickdale was in a position to give out a good deal of work in the shape of law copying, and at this the two would work when nothing else was to be done. I say the "two" advisedly, for in due time, and after much labour, Gabrielle attained to a considerable proficiency in round-hand, and in due time was able to relieve her husband of this sort of drudgery at any rate.

In short, these young people were exposed to privations and troubles of the most harassing and miserable kind, and which their bringing up and earlier habits had in no sort fitted them to undergo. It was a terrible ordeal, and one which it required great patience and courage to pass through.

And all that day which succeeded the conversation described at the beginning of this chapter, Gabrielle pondered over these things, and thought of her husband and his disappointments and privations, and how these last might at least be alleviated by accepting his cousin's proposal, and so at last her mind was made up, and she repeated to herself, "We have got our happiness of being together, and we would not exercise patience and wait, and so we must not think it a great matter that we have some need to be patient now, and bear together, instead of bearing apart."

So when her husband came home, she told him in the most wilful manner that the thing was settled, and that he was to write off to his cousin, and inform her that rooms would be prepared for her reception, and that of the servant who was to accompany her, and that everything would be ready at the commencement of the ensuing week.

CHAPTER III. AN ARRIVAL.

The day appointed for the arrival of Miss Carrington was not a pleasant one. It was a stormy November day, windy, with gusts of rain. Everything went wrong in the house in Beaumont-street. The chimneys smoked, the doors banged, a looking-glass was blown down by the wind and smashed to pieces, and poor little Mrs. Penmore's heart quailed at the omen even more than at the loss. Then the servant, the one servant, had a sulky fit, and refused to be comforted. Moreover, she took to disappearing.

It requires some experience of domestic difficulties to enable any person to appreciate the full horror of this proceeding. Something is wanted below, and the maiden is despatched promptly to get it. Instead of returning, however, she remains below, and is not unearthed without much calling and ringing. At last she appears without the object in search of which she was sent, and disappears again in search of it. Then the area-bell rings, and a tradesman holds the young woman spell-bound on the kitchen-steps, where, of course, she cannot hear a summons from the bedroom. At last—for this is a windy day, let us remember—the door bangs, our damsel is shut out, and her mistress, having reached the stage of desperation, descends to the kitchen to see what has become of "Charlotte," and finds her tapping at the window for admittance in a manner sufficiently aggravating. Even now, however, she is not to be considered as a secure property. She discovers that it is the right day for needlework, and when everything is in the wildest confusion up-stairs, and she is wanted there every moment, she is continually relapsing into calm stocking-mending, or perhaps does a trifle in the way of washing and ironing on her own account. Nor

must it be forgotten that this is the day when discoveries are made that "we have no firewood," or that "we are out of potatoes," and so disappearances on quite an extended scale in search of these luxuries, become not only indispensable, but meritorious. It would be difficult, in this particular instance, to say whether this young woman's sulkiness or her disappearances was the most trying.

Of course, the larger part of the work upstairs fell to the share of the mistress of the house. It was upon her that devolved all the trouble of planning which rooms were to be given to her guest and to her servant (I believe Mrs. Penmore dreaded this last most of the two), and how they could be arranged most satisfactorily. She it was who had to twist and turn the poor furniture about so as to make it show to the best advantage, and to execute wonders with bits of pink calico showing through cheap muslin. As to her own bedroom, she literally despoiled it, taking all the articles that had any æsthetic pretensions at all up-stairs to Miss Carrington's room, and leaving herself, as Charlotte elegantly put it, "without a stick." The room prepared for Miss Carrington presented at last quite a pretty appearance, so much will taste do in these cases even with a very small expenditure of capital.

Altogether, it was a day of many fatigues and difficulties, and besides all these, it was necessary to get up some sort of meal for the lady, and another for the dreaded servant, both of whom were to arrive at about eight o'clock in the evening. Moreover, the butcher did not send what was required of him, and Charlotte disappeared, as might have been expected, to remind him of his neglect.

But the worst trouble of all that poor Gabrielle had to bear that day, was her husband's absence. He must be away at the time when the formidable lady was to arrive. That evening he had work to do at a newspaper office, and work, in his case, could never be neglected. It would be necessary, then, that Mrs. Penmore should receive her new guest alone and unsupported. Alone she must face this utter stranger, and encounter all that might be awkward, or even unpleasant, in connexion with this first interview. There was nothing for it, however, but to endure and go through it, so Gabrielle made up her mind—a proceeding which enables us to get through a great many things which appear to be absolutely unendurable.

The day and part of the evening were consumed in preparations, and it was not till the time for the arrival of Miss Carrington drew very near, that Mrs. Penmore found time at last to sit down, almost for the first time that day, and await with many nervous qualms the arrival of her guest. The tea-things were spread comfortably upon a white cloth, and there was a fowl (awful extravagance) cooking at the fire below. It had been discovered, at the eleventh hour, that there was no fresh butter in the house, and Charlotte had been despatched in search of that luxury, so Gabrielle sat in an agony of dread lest the new arrivals should come before the wretched handmaid had returned from her errand.

Of course it happened so. The Fates are merciless in these cases, and Charlotte had not returned from this, her last disappearance, when Mrs. Penmore, who had been listening with strained attention to every sound that came from the street outside, distinctly heard the rattle of wheels on the pavement, heard them draw nearer and nearer, heard a female voice screaming the number of the house to the cabman, upon which the vehicle suddenly stopped and drew up at the door, while a furious peal at the street bell announced that the hour had arrived which poor Gabrielle had so long and so keenly dreaded.

And now there was nothing for it but to go and open the door. The servant had not returned, and it was quite impossible to keep her visitor waiting outside. While she had hesitated, the bell had sounded again, and it was still ringing when she at length opened the door, and found herself face to face with a middle-aged female of a fierce and acid countenance, who was standing on the door-step. Behind her was a cab, the door of which was held open by the driver, while a lady was dimly seen within, waiting to emerge, till it had been certainly ascertained that this was the right house.

"Does Mr. Penmore live here?" asked the acid one.

Gabrielle answered timidly in the affirmative, and she of the fierce visage having conveyed the information to the lady in the cab, this last descended without more ado and came into the house. She looked sharply at Gabrielle, who now advanced with extended hand, as if she doubted her genuineness, and then, taking the offered hand in a hesitating manner, exclaimed:

"What! are you Mrs. Penmore, and don't you keep a servant?"

"Oh yes, we have a servant, but she was obliged to go out on an errand just now. Pray come in here and warm yourself," she added, opening the dining-room door.

"Oh!" said Miss Carrington, with a little scream, as she entered, "what a funny little place."

"Funny!" what a terrible word that was. The room was little, but it was neat. It was even prettily arranged, but the furniture was not of the conventional dining-room sort, and, alas! it must be owned that, in the get-up of that apartment, subterfuge was not unknown. But to say "funny"—oh, that was a cruel word.

Meanwhile the servant, for such was the acid lady who had originally confronted Gabrielle on the door-step, followed her mistress to the door of the room, into which she looked for a moment, and then, with a slight toss of the head, she returned to superintend the unloading of the cab, honouring Gabrielle as she passed with a prolonged and exhaustive stare.

While the bumping and bursting noises inseparable from the introduction of large luggage

into a small house were going on in the passage, Mrs. Penmore and her guest were left confronting each other in the dining-room, and Gabrielle saw, to begin with, and, as a matter of course, that the newly arrived lady was not in the least the sort of person she had expected. Miss Carrington, to begin with, was handsomer, as far as features went, than Gabrielle had expected, but her complexion was not by any means a good one, and she had an uneasy, dissatisfied expression, which made one feel uncomfortable in her presence. She seemed to be about thirty years of age, or perhaps a year or two more, was thin and haggard-looking, and had the art of saying disagreeable things in a sharp, aggravating voice. I believe she could not help this, for when she tried to be agreeable—which, it must be owned, was seldom enough—then it was that the most spiteful things of all would come out.

"Ah, one could tell that you were of foreign blood," said Miss Carrington, "only by looking at you, and without hearing you speak. You are so very dark."

Gabrielle excused herself under this accusation as well as she could, by intimating that the sun, where she was brought up, was rather a powerful one, and that the inhabitants of the West Indian Islands were generally gifted with darker complexions than fell to the lot of Europeans. At this moment there was a smart rap at the door, and the form of the sour-visaged servant appeared. She seemed to be chewing venom, from the expression of her mouth.

"Well, Cantanker, what is it?" inquired Miss Carrington. It is needful to mention that the name of this agreeable-looking female was Jane Cantanker. Destiny had, by a strange freak, fitted, in this case, the name to the woman in a remarkable manner.

"I merely wished to ask," said Miss Cantanker, with the gurgling of suppressed fury in her voice, "where I am expected to set in the evening?" and she looked inquiringly round the room, as if she rather expected to see an open door, with a luxurious apartment beyond, to be devoted to her special service.

Miss Carrington looked at her hostess. "You can answer that best, I think," she said.

"Well," replied the poor little woman, with much hesitation, "I thought—I thought the kitchen—I was not prepared."

"There, Cantanker, do you hear," said Miss Carrington. For the woman had remained like a block of marble, and had taken no notice of what Mrs. Penmore had said.

"Begging your pardon, miss," she now remarked, addressing her mistress, "I shall set in no such place, for, besides that the floor is of stone and the cheers bare Windsor ones, the servant-girl is but an ignorant maid-of-all-work, and not fit company for decent people."

There was an awkward pause after this.

"Well," said Miss Carrington, "what's to be done?"

Poor Mrs. Penmore hesitated more than ever. "I am sure I don't know, unless," she added—"unless you would like to sit in your bedroom."

"Do you hear?" asked Miss Carrington, for Cantanker had again become marble.

"I hear, miss," said this relentless person, condescending to answer her mistress, but looking steadily at Gabrielle, as she had done from the first. "I have not yet seen it."

"You had better ask Charlotte, as she is come back, to show it you," said Mrs. Penmore, timidly.

Miss Cantanker remained fixed and stationary. And again her mistress had to interpret.

"You had better ask Charlotte to show it to you."

Very slowly, and with her eyes still fixed upon Mrs. Penmore, the accommodating Miss Cantanker backed towards the door, and, after consuming as much time in the act as was possible, opened it, and vanished slowly.

"Is not my cousin at home?" inquired Miss Carrington, as soon as this agreeable person had disappeared; and the lady looked inquisitively about the room, as if she expected to see the unfortunate Gilbert concealed in some corner.

"He was very sorry," Mrs. Penmore replied—"very sorry indeed, but he was obliged to be away to-night."

"I think he might have stretched a point under the circumstances," said the lady, in an injured tone.

"I do assure you," urged poor Gabrielle, "that nothing but a matter of business, which could not be put off, would have taken him out on such an occasion."

After this there was a pause of some considerable duration. It was only broken by the information conveyed by Miss Carrington to her hostess that "she never took tea;" and as the meal which had been prepared for her special benefit *was* tea, this was rather disconcerting. There was nothing for it but to get out a bottle of Marsala and decant it then and there. Miss Carrington watched the performance of this process with a cold and somewhat cruel stare, and then came another long pause, and then another sharp tap at the door, followed without ceremony by the entry of Miss Cantanker with an expression of countenance which it was not good to behold.

"Well, Cantank——" Miss Carrington was beginning, when her maid interrupted her.

"I wish to know, miss, whether I have come here to be insulted, and put in a dog-hole to sleep?"

This tremendous question, which was put *to* Miss Carrington, but *at* the luckless Gabrielle, was on so fearful a scale, that poor Mrs. Penmore was struck entirely speechless by it.

"Explain yourself, Cantanker," her mistress interposed. "Do you mean that your room is not what you like?"

"Like!" echoed the maiden. "Like!" and she spoke with awful slowness and solemnity. "It is a garret. It has a sloping roof. The cheers is rush-bottomed. There are no curtains

to the bed, which itself is a turn-up; there is no carpet but a 'bedside.' There is not a mossul of fire, and, what is more, there is no grate to put one in."

"Really, I think——" Miss Carrington commenced in an injured tone, and addressing Gabrielle. But Cantanker had not done yet.

"And hif Mrs. Penmore thinks," she went on, still, however speaking to her mistress, "hif she thinks that I am going to put up with a dog-hole, and that I am come here tamely to be insulted, she will find that she is mistaken, and that Jane Cantanker is not the woman to be put upon."

Here the lady relapsed into silence, and stood looking defiance at a photographic portrait of Mr. Penmore which hung against the wall.

"I really think," resumed Miss Carrington, "that you might have provided a little better for the comfort of my servant, Mrs. Penmore."

"I thought it was very comfortable," urged the wretched Gabrielle. "I know that it is all nice and clean, and as to the fire, I had no idea that your servant would expect such a thing. Surely it is very unusual."

"Jane Cantanker is more than a servant to me. She is a companion, and I look upon any slight put upon her as an injury done to myself."

"There is an apartment next to my mistress's, and it is that which I should wish to occupy," remarked Miss Cantanker, sententiously, and still looking at the photograph.

"Oh, that is my husband's study," cried Mrs. Penmore, aghast.

"Study or no study, that is the room which I should wish to occupy," repeated Cantanker.

"Really," Miss Carrington remarked, with a slight toss, "I think that studies are all very well, but under the circumstances—when people get a good price for their rooms——"

Gabrielle started at that sting, and the West Indian element in her blood was all on fire. But presently she remembered how much was at stake, and called up her newly-formed resolution to endure.

"If you could put up with it just at first," she said, "we might see afterwards what other arrangement could be made."

But Miss Cantanker was not to be dealt with so easily. She hastened to remind the assembled company that she was not going to be put upon, that to sleep in a dog-hole was a thing she would not consent to do. Moreover, she stated that she had never been so treated in the whole course of her life, and this consideration appearing to strike her in a piteous light, and to fill her with great commiseration for herself, she finally asserted that she did not think to have lived to be thus cruelly dealt with, and bursting into a volley of sobs, sank into a neighbouring chair, and took to hysterics.

After this there was a great commotion. Every consolatory topic was tried, and for a time in vain, till it occurred to somebody—possibly because the lady herself, with a glazed eye fixed upon the decanter, stammered forth that "she felt a sinking"—it occurred to somebody to administer a glass of Marsala, followed by a second, a course of treatment which was attended with such success, that at last this angelic martyr, after much flattery and cajolery, so far gave way as to consent to occupy the "dog-hole" for one night, and one night only, on the condition, distinctly understood, that she was never asked so much as to pass its detested threshold again.

And this difficulty disposed of, there remained the mistress to appease as well as the maid. Miss Carrington did not like her room. It was small and stuffy, and the pattern of the chintz was hideous. Then there was no cheval-glass, and that, mind, must be remedied the very next day. The room had not a sunny aspect, a condition of affairs which could not be remedied so easily. Then the bed was not placed north and south, and that was an unpardonable piece of negligence, and must be set right at once, though it implied the moving of every article of furniture in the room. Moreover, she wished for a night-light, and the unhappy Charlotte had to be despatched at a late hour to get some. Finally, she was very much disappointed that there was no broth in the house, as she always liked, not taking tea, to have a cup of broth the last thing at night.

That night, when, at last, the house was quiet, and her guests, for a time at least, disposed of, poor Mrs. Penmore fell into a paroxysm of bitter grief, and wept till her pillow was wet with her tears. It was past three o'clock in the morning when her husband came back, and when she saw how tired and worn he looked, and thought how much he went through for her, she determined that at least for that night he should not be distressed by anything that she could tell him. So as he leaned over the bed and showed her the money that he had earned, she put her arms about his neck and smiled upon him, and told him how his cousin had arrived, and how they had had a nice fowl for supper, and a bottle of Marsala—as Miss Carrington did not take tea—and how the lady and her servant were both made comfortable for the night.

WRITING FOR PERIODICALS.

It is curious that, although periodical literature is almost the daily bread of millions, the popular mind should still be so ignorant of many of the particulars of its production.

In the first place, it is supposed to be the simplest thing in the world. The writers, the editors, and the publishers, have no more trouble in sending it out, than the subscriber has in taking it in from the postman. It is the spontaneous growth of progressing time. It comes as regularly and naturally as Saturday and Sunday. Like the ceaseless rivers, the beds are there, and the water has nothing to do but to flow. As certainly as sunrise is the consequence

of sunset; as surely as the old worn-out moon is followed by a bright bran-new one; so surely is to-day's, this week's, this month's number succeeded by to-morrow's, next week's, next month's; while the Quarterlies come out in their variously tinted covers as inevitably as summer pushes spring overboard, and winter treads on autumn's heels. If you wish to realise how quickly time flies, put your name to a bill, or look at the periodicals accumulated on your book-shelves.

The same thoughtless feeling, or the same ignorance, exists on the other side of the Channel, as in England. Hard-working French citizens have little sympathy with the labours of artists and literary men—whom they consider as an *idle* race. The idea, of course, is based on a misconception. With many folks, head-work does not pass for work, but merely for amusement. Turning a wheel, carrying a load, that indeed is really work. But to sit down in front of a quire of paper, and to write on it "all that comes into your head," is just the pastime of a person with nothing to do. It is equivalent to cards, backgammon, and amatory epistolary correspondence. George Stephenson going to bed in broad daylight, to solve in his head complicated engineering problems, and Rossini dashing off his operas in a similar recumbent position, would be alike included in the category of sluggards taking their ease in the Castle of Indolence. There are people who cannot understand that writing should be paid for; on the contrary, they think the writer should pay for the pleasure of seeing himself in print. The legends respecting Scribe, for instance, the great French dramatic author, received by the small Parisian bourgeoisie, would be amusing to collect and put on record. In the first place, many believed that he caused to be performed, in his own proper name, all the dramatic manuscripts that were left at his door. As to the handsome fortune he acquired, some persist in attributing its origin to gambling at the Bourse, or to speculations in land. "It is not by playwriting," observed a respectable shopkeeper, "that a man can earn three or four million francs; *for if he could, everybody else would do the same.*"

But if people who earn their bread, or increase their income, by literature and its sister arts, do not work, at least they suffer from the effects of work, as is proved in Tissot's excellent essay, De la Santé des Gens de Lettres. For he holds that the arrangement of a picture, or the composition of a grand piece of music, requires as strong a mental effort as the pursuit of the most abstract studies.

Their diseases, he says, have two principal causes: assiduous labour of the mind, and continual repose of the body. He quotes our English Adventurer, to the effect that "the multitude, who live by bodily labour, imagine that study does not fatigue. They are under a mistake. Thinking is work which fatigues no less than the artisan's or the labourer's toil, without having its advantages. The latter gives health, strength, cheerfulness, sound sleep, and a good appetite; whereas a studious and sedentary life produces exactly the contrary effects."

While thought goes on, the brain is in action. But every bodily organ, set in action, tires at last; and if the action be too long continued, its functions become deranged. When the mind, by protracted intellectual exercise, has impressed too energetic an action upon the brain, it is no longer mistress of its movements, and loses the power of stopping it. The persons who are the soonest put out of health by mental exertion, are those who are incessantly occupied with one single subject; only one portion of the sensorium is strained, and *that* is always in a state of tension. Over-exertion of the brain, moreover, causes a determination of blood to the head. I refrain from frightening the reader with a list of the diseases which are the result of leading a sedentary life. Over-activity of mind, combined with inactivity of body, is the cause of not a small proportion of the evils which learned, literary, and artistic flesh are heirs to.

"It is picking up money in the street," remarked a person who was present when I received a cheque for contributions to a periodical.

"Is it?" I said; "then try to pick up a little yourself in the same way."

"I haven't the time. I have other things to attend to. It is not in my line. You have got into the way of it. You are on the editor's or the publisher's good books," and so on, are the usual rejoinders to the above reply; and a slight disillusion is frequently felt when the aspirant, hitherto a reader, thinks of writing. The manuscripts that have been shown for my opinion! Luckily, not multitudinous in number, but wonderful in quality. With neither head, tail, nor middle. Editors see more of those curiosities in a month than any isolated literary man can in a year. In vol. vii. of Household Words, page 145, is an article headed "H. W.," describing some of the machinery by which that journal was produced, and also a few of its correspondents' eccentricities. No doubt, in the dozen years which have since elapsed, such a stratum of oddities and absurdities must have been showered upon the conductors, that, if allowed to remain in situ, it would be thick enough to bury them out of sight.

When I have ventured to observe to intending contributors, "It is not usual to send in articles written in old copy-books between the round-text, nor on both sides of the paper, nor with all those manifest blunders, nor marked with blots, grease-spots, and the circular bottoms of pewter pint-pots——"

"It was a coffee-cup did that."

"Well, a coffee-cup. I don't say it wasn't. But suppose you first carefully look your paper through, correct every fault you discover, remedy the tautology and the mistakes in spelling, and then copy it out fairly and neatly,

writing on one side of the paper only,—I will look at it again, and see how it promises."

A not uncommon answer is, that that sort of thing is a great deal too much trouble. It would seem that it really is intended to pick up money in the streets—for essayists of this class mostly expect to be handsomely paid. Voltaire might well call correcting other people's manuscripts "washing dirty linen."

This journal once returned to me an article in type, with the suggestion that, as it touched on *two* topics, it would be improved by being cut in two, and giving each portion a more developed treatment, so converting it into a couple of distinct and homogeneous treatises.

"Do they take so much pains with articles as that!" exclaimed a friend of some attainments, to whom I showed the slips.

"You see they do."

An article may be likened to a drawing. It may be either a mere sketch, or a finished picture. All the better if it can combine the accuracy of the photograph with the spirit of the study from nature; but the delineation of something must be there. The subject is the plain canvas on which the artist traces the outlines of his conception. The work grows. He brings out certain important features, while he throws others into the shade, or, perhaps, on second thoughts, suppresses them utterly! He avoids false perspective and inharmonious colouring. He puts everything in its proper place, and displays it in its proper light. When he is satisfied that it represents what he means, he passes over the whole the varnish of correct and polished style; and then it goes to the exhibition, to be rejected by the hanging committee, or to throw the pictures beside it into the shade. This simile is chiefly applicable to narrative or descriptive papers.

We shall not be much further from the truth in comparing the writing of an argumentative or logical paper, to the construction of a machine intended to perform some work. When the whole is put together, we try it privately, find out where it hitches, lengthen this lever, tighten that screw, add a wheel here, extract a cog there, until we fully grind out our desired conclusion. With a little oil or anti-friction grease, the machinery is then fit for public service.

After a literary aspirant has taken every pains, and done all in his power to ensure success, let him not be discouraged by a first rebuff. C'est le premier pas qui coûte. He may find favour a *second* time; and so the second or third attempt may be *his* premier pas. Industry and perseverance have an effectual influence in literature, as well as in every other career of life. Most periodicals have their special character, which may render some given article (quite meritorious in itself) perfectly unsuitable for their acceptance. The first paper I sent to this journal was declined; the second published. With the exception of the Quarterly Review (with which topics were agreed upon before they were undertaken), I have not, I think, written for any journal which has not published something which some other journal had declined. One editor's poison may be another editor's meat. Two journals have, on second thoughts, published papers which they had themselves declined.

Then, again, there is the question of room. A certain number of pages, of a given type, can contain only a given quantity of matter. You cannot put a bushel of wheat, however first-rate in quality, into a peck measure. The superabundant quantity must remain outside. It can wait, you say, till the next measuring occurs; but how will you like the indefinite delay? And if the supply continue, what is to be done? Moreover, an editor must seize passing events by the forelock. An article, well-timed to day, may have lost all its interest this day month. And thus a discussion of present occurrences may push aside a really superior essay possessing merely pure literary merits.

It is impossible to quite lose sight of the mercantile aspects of literature—of periodical literature especially. It must either pay, or must cease to exist. It is art; and its object is to instruct and elevate: but its agents and instruments must live. Even if a volunteer army of amateur contributors were forthcoming, paper-makers, printers, and publishers cannot afford to amuse and enlighten the nation gratis. The periodical must sell; that is, it must contain taking and attractive matter which the reading public will gladly purchase for copper or silver coin of the realm.

There is a class of beings of whose existence certain literary candidates do not seem to be aware. Still they are men of like feelings with ourselves, similarly constituted in all their limbs and organs. They have eyes like ours, only somewhat sharper, and fingers like ours, only quicker and nimbler. They have heads that can ache, when overworked, and tempers that can fret, when overtried. I mean compositors and printers' readers. A writer should surely have some thought of *them;* for it is solely through their mechanical agency that his lucubrations are given to the world. A writer, sitting at an open window in the country, may be indifferent as to the quality of his ink; knowing what he has written, *he* can read it, be it of the palest grey. But remembering that it has to be put in type by persons working in smoke-darkened cities, or often by gaslight, he will surely save all unnecessary strain of their eyesight, by employing no liquid that is not decidedly legibly black.

Of handwriting, it is more difficult to speak; it is a matter, often, of inveterate habit. Its defects are less easily corrected, being intimately connected with the penman's individuality.

Not a few eminent literary men have been eminently illegible penmen. Still, in practice, the inconvenience is less than might at first sight appear. The scrawls thrown off by hard-pressed journalists or editors fall into the hands of persons who are in the habit of deciphering them. Some editors do not pronounce their final judgment on the communications of well-known and tried contributors until they have perused them in type. It shows, however, the great importance of sending in a first essay in perfectly legible handwriting, even if it be necessary to employ a copyist. In the long run, the poor compositors are the greatest sufferers from illegibility. One great author was their notorious tormentor. What with the blurs, blots, and pothooks in his manuscript, and what with his interminable alterations, corrections, transpositions, and interpolations in the proof itself, the Paris printers stipulated not to have more than so many hours per day of Balzac.

And if the contributor feels bound to remember the compositor when he sends in his copy, what consideration ought he not to show in his dealings with the editor —with the man at the helm of a popular periodical?

The contributor may take his ease. He may wait for the fit of inspiration, or the whim of the moment, before putting pen to paper. If he send in *no* article that week, or that month, he puts no great interest of his own in jeopardy. If he be idle, he misses earning a few guineas—of which he is well aware, and takes the consequences—and that is all. Unless he write leaders for the Times, or do other pressing, promptly-to-be-executed work, he need not even reside in town—unless he like it best. He may pitch his tent in pleasant places, on the brow of a cliff or on the verge of a forest; in summer, aloft amidst the hills; in winter, below in sunny nooks. Even when close kept "on" a journal, he frequently gets a good annual holiday-run or two. There are missions which may be pleasant as well as profitable. The editor, on the contrary, who has often not only the responsibility of, but often a heavy stake in, his publication, is tied by a tether of very definite shortness. When London is empty, and respectable people are ashamed to be seen remaining in it, cabmen and editors cannot quit. September shines no holiday for them. The forthcoming number has to be made up, and subsequent numbers to be projected, provided for, and prepared. There are never-ceasing acceptances to be made, decisions arrived at, and refusals conveyed. And the correspondence? Have you any idea of an editor's correspondence?

Periodical writers will occasionally have to handle topics with which they are little familiar, exactly as barristers are liable to be called on to plead in causes of whose technical details they are completely ignorant. But some people hold that a person of education and literary habits ought to be able (with time and preparation) to speak and write on *any* subject. A writer, like a barrister, may take the trouble to get up his subject, "cramming" for it, in examination phrase, making himself acquainted with all the minutiæ of the matter in dispute, before addressing the court or the public. Each individual advocate may have his own particular method of working out the task before him. Not a bad plan is, first to get together all available evidence and information—bushels of books, packets of documents, plans, maps, drawings—not neglecting personal visits, inspection, and inquiry, should such be needed —and then mentally to digest the whole, applying to the work such common sense and acuteness as one happens to be gifted with. It will often happen that a fresh mind, exercising itself upon questions which, to it, are unfamiliar and unhackneyed, will see things from a clearer point of view than persons of older experience, to whom they are a matter of daily routine. And the result is, that several clever improvements in machinery have been made by lawyers, who never would have dreamt of such inventions had not the details been brought before them in the course of their professional duties.

In this branch of literature, it is quite a mistake to go to work on the "exhaustive" principle. In article-writing, as in extempore preaching, the great difficulty is to know when to stop. "How, with such a theme in hand, can you possibly limit yourself to four or five pages? You might write five hundred, and not have done with it," is a question I have frequently heard. But Voltaire exclaimed, "Woe be to the man who says about a subject all that *can* be said!" With printed discourse, as with personal companionship, it is better that your friend should regret the shortness of your visit than that he should yawn at its lengthiness.

Some few anxious candidates for the honours of type would gladly offer their manuscript gratis, so that it could but appear. They would, however, be no great gainers by yielding to the temptation of making that offer. Now that authorship has become a distinct and recognised profession, experienced editors find that contributions offered for nothing are worth no more than the value set upon them. A little consideration will make it clear that it is more to their interest to pay adequately for a well-written paper, than to publish a poor one without payment. It is upon the broadest basis of public favour, esteem, and respect, that a permanent prosperity can alone be founded; and those objects can only be attained by paying well the most capable writers whose abilities lie within the range of that particular periodical's scope. It may even be laid down as a general rule, that authors who may happen to be wealthy ought not to make a practice of writing for nothing; because, by so doing, they would tend to take the bread out of the mouths of their professional brethren. They may do so occasionally—to oblige a dear friend,

to perform an act of charity, or to return an obligation; which, in fact, is not writing for nothing.

THE CRY OF THE INNOCENTS.

From out the depths of misery
There comes a feeble, wailing cry:
'Tis faint at first, and scarcely heard,
Like the last note of dying bird,
When all the forest boughs are bare,
And winter reigneth everywhere.

Again it comes; it gathers strength,
As though throughout the breadth and length
Of this our land—so rich, so bright,
So glorious in her Christian light—
Some woe repressed had found a vent,
In utterance wild, of discontent.

And yet again, on every side
We hear it rising, like a tide
Of shame and sorrow, fear and dread:
Is it the living, or the dead,
That ask for succour and redress
In accents full of wretchedness?

True mothers of fair babes possessed,
Clasp them more tightly to the breast,
And shrink with terror, when they hear
That wail of anguish and of fear,
Which tells how far, and deep, and wide,
Hath spread the crime—*Infanticide!*

It cometh not from Ganges' shore,
Where woman kills the babe she bore,
And stifles all a mother's love,
Devotion to her gods to prove;
Nor from the isles, where palm-trees wave
Above the infant victim's grave:

From haunts of vice, and homes of sin,
Where most the Tempter souls may win;
From squalid hovels, where no ray
Of light divine hath found a way;
Like beasts where human beings herd,
By vilest passions only stirred.

Yet not alone from scenes like these
Cometh that cry, the blood to freeze;
From homes of comfort, where disgrace
Of secret sin may find no place;
From stately dwellings, where no blame
May rest upon a spotless name.

The reeds that rustle in the mere
Whisper unto the startled ear
The ghastly secret, and the leaves
Tell how the sighing forest grieves
O'er man's depravity, and all
The sad results of woman's fall.

The stream that through the meadow flows
Singeth low dirges as it goes;
And to the shore the angry main
The lifeless form flings back again,
While gentle breeze, and stormy gale,
Bear east and west that piteous wail.

Of murdered innocents the cry!
As when beneath the midnight sky
Migrating flocks from icy north,
Their shrill complainings utter forth,
Which sound, amid the impervious gloom,
Like warning voices from the tomb.

And let them not unheeded be;
They come, my country, unto thee,
To warn, admonish, and refrain;
Shall the old tale be told in vain,
Of luxury and crime, that lead
The way to ruin down with speed?

Of murdered innocents the groan,
To Him upon the great white throne
Goes up, and all those blossoms fair,
Crushed upon earth, are cherished there,
To stand as witnesses, and say,
"Thou didst it!" in the Judgment Day.

HALF A MILLION OF MONEY.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "BARBARA'S HISTORY."

CHAPTER LII. HELEN RIVIÈRE.

Born and bred on the top floor of a gloomy old house in a still gloomier by-street of Florence, Helen Rivière had spent her childhood in a solitude almost as far removed from the busy press and shock of ordinary life as if she had been reared in a Highland boothy, half way betwixt the earth and sky. All the circumstances of her home and her home-life were exceptional. She had known none of the companionship and few of the joys of childhood. No rambles in green fields and purple vineyards, no pleasant rivalry of school-class and playground, no early friendships, with their innocent joys and sorrows, had ever been hers. Her mother was her one playmate, instructor, and friend. The flat house-top, with its open loggia, its tubs of orange-trees and myrtles, and its boxes of nasturtiums and mignonette, was her only playground. From thence she saw the burning sunsets and the violet hills; from thence looked down on dome and campanile, crowded street and mediæval palace. This bird's-eye view of the rare old city, with such echoes of its life as found their way to her upper world, was almost all that Helen knew of Florence. Now and then, at very distant intervals, she had been led down into that busy lower world, to wander for a few hours through streets and piazzas stately with fountains and statues, or galleries so radiant with Madonnas and angels that they seemed like the vestibules of heaven; but this was very seldom.

Yet the child had, as it were, breathed all her life in an atmosphere of art. She could not remember the time when its phraseology and appliances were other than familiar to her. Her father's dimly-lighted studio, redolent of oil and varnish, and littered with canvases and casts; her father himself, in his smeared blouse and velvet cap, painting his unsaleable Nymphs and Dryads year after year with unabated enthusiasm; the lay figure in its folds of dusty drapery; the shabby studenti with their long hair and professional jargon, who used to drop in at twilight to smoke their cheap cigars upon the terraced roof, and declaim about art and liberty; the habit of observation insensibly acquired, and her own natural delight in form and colour, all combined to mould her inclina-

tions and train her taste from earliest infancy. As a little child, she used to scrawl in pencil till her father taught her the rudiments of drawing. By-and-by, as she grew older and more skilful, she learned to colour prints and photographs for sale, and, some few months before her father died, had begun to study the art of enamel-painting.

Isolated thus in the heart of an ancient city; looking down upon the alien throng in street and market-place; watching the golden sunlight fade and change on Giotto's bell-tower and Brunellesco's rusty dome; listening to the clang of bells at matins and even-song, and catching now and then faint echoes of chanted hymn or military march; growing daily more and more familiar with the glories of Italian skies; reading few books, seeing few faces, and ignorant of life and the world as a cloistered nun, this young girl spent the first years of her solitary youth. And they were very happy years, although—nay, perhaps *because*—they were so solitary. Having few ties, few tastes, few occupations, her character became more intense, her aims more concentrated than those of most very young women. She loved her mother with a passionate devotion that knew no limit to obedience and tenderness. She reverenced and admired her father with so blind a faith in his genius, that, despite her better knowledge, she believed even in the Nymphs and Dryads with all her tender heart. If her reading had been circumscribed, it had at least been thorough. Shakespeare and Milton, Dante and the Bible, made the best part of her library; but she had read and re-read these books, thought about them for herself, treasured up long passages from them in her memory, and gathered from their pages more poetry, wisdom, and knowledge than ever came off the shelves of a modern circulating library. Nor were these the only advantages of her secluded life. Never having known wealth, she was poor without being conscious of poverty—just as she was innocent, because she had seen no evil—just as she was happy, because she coveted no blessings which were not already hers.

But at length there came a time when this simple home was to be made desolate. The unsuccessful painter fell ill and died, leaving his wife to the cold charity of Lady Castletowers. In an evil hour she travelled home to England, thinking so to conciliate her haughty sister and serve her child. But Lady Castletowers declined to see her; and the bitter English winter smote upon her delicate lungs and brought her to the verge of the grave; and for this it was that Helen Rivière went down to Castletowers, and prayed her haughty aunt for such trifling succour as should take them back in time to the sweet south.

Just at this crisis, like a prince in a fairy tale, Mr. Trefalden made his appearance in their dreary London lodging, bringing with him hope and liberty, and his cousin Saxon's gold. If his story were not true, if he had never known Edgar Rivière in his life, if he despised the pictures he affected to praise, how were they to detect it? Enlightened connoisseur, munificent patron, disinterested friend that he was, how should the widow and orphan suspect that he purchased his claim to those titles with another man's money?

CHAPTER LIII. SAXON CONQUEROR.

Saxon Trefalden, writing letters as he sat by the open window in his pleasant bedroom at Castletowers, laid his pen aside, and looked out wistfully at the sky and the trees. The view over the park from this point was not extensive; but it was green and sunny; and as the soft air came and went, bringing with it a faint perfume of distant hay, the young man thought of his pastoral home in the old Etruscan canton far away.

He knew, as well as if he were gazing upon them from that tiny shelf of orchard-ground at Rotzberg, how the grey, battlemented ridge of the Ringel was standing out against the deep blue sky; how tenderly the shadows lay in the unmelted snowdrifts in the hollows of the Galanda; and how the white slopes of the far-off Julian Alp were glittering in the sun. He knew, as well as if he were listening to them, how the goat-bells were making pleasant music to the brawling of the Hinter Rhine below; and how the pines were falling every now and then with a sullen crash beneath the measured blows of the woodman's axe. And then he sighed, and went back to his task.

A pile of hastily scribbled notes to London acquaintances and tradesmen lay on one side, ready for the post-bag; and he was now writing a long letter to his uncle Martin—a long, long letter, full of news, and bright projects, and written in Saxon's clearest and closest hand. Long as it was, however, it was not finished, and would not be finished till the morrow. He had something yet to add to it; and that something, although it could not be added now, was perplexing him not a little as he sat, pen in hand, looking out absently at the shadows that swept over the landscape.

He had made up his mind to propose to Olimpia Colonna.

He had told himself over and over again that the man who aspired to her hand should be a prince, a hero, a soldier, an ardent patriot, at the least; and yet, modest as he was of his own merit, he could no longer doubt that his proposal would be accepted whenever he should have the courage to make it. Lady Castletowers, who had shown a great deal of condescending interest in him of late, had dropped more than one flattering hint with the view of urging him forward in his suit. Colonna's bearing towards him, ever since the day when he had given in his subscription, had been almost significantly cordial; and Olimpia's smiles were lavish of encouragement. Already he had been more than once on the brink of an avowal; and now, as the last week of his visit was drawing to a close, and his letter to Switzerland awaited despatch, he had fairly reviewed his

position, and come to the conclusion that he would make Miss Colonna a formal offer of his hand in the course of that same day.

"If she really doesn't love me," said he, half-aloud, as he sat biting the end of his pen and staring down at the unfinished page, "she'll say so, and there will be an end of it. If she *does* love me—and, somehow, I cannot believe it!—why, although she is a million times too good, and too beautiful, and too high-born for an uncivilised mountaineer such as I, I will do my best, with God's help, to be worthy of her choice."

And then he thought of all the intoxicating looks and smiles with which Olimpia had received his awkward homage; and the more he considered these things, the more clearly he saw, and marvelled at, the distinction that had befallen him.

And yet he was by no means beside himself with happiness—perhaps, because, if the truth must be confessed, he was not very deeply in love. He admired Olimpia Colonna intensely. He thought her the most beautiful and high-minded woman under heaven; but, after all, he did not feel for her that profound, and tender, and passionate sympathy which had been the dream of his boyhood. Even now, when most completely under the spell of her influence, he was vaguely conscious of this want. Even now, in the very moment of anticipated triumph, when his heart beat high at the thought of winning her, he found himself wondering whether he should be able to make her happy—whether she would love his uncle Martin—whether she would always be quite as much absorbed in Italian politics and Italian liberty?

When he had arrived at this point, he was interrupted by a tap at the door, and a voice outside asking if there was "any admission?"

"Always, for you," replied Saxon; whereupon the Earl opened the door and came in.

"There!" said he, "you're writing letters, and don't want me."

"On the contrary, I have written all that are to be posted to day, and am glad to be interrupted. There's the rocking-chair at your service."

"Thanks. May I take a cigar?"

"Twenty, if you will. And now, what news since breakfast?"

"A good deal, I suspect," replied the Earl, moodily. "Montecuculi's here."

"Who is Montecuculi?"

"One of our Central Committee men—an excellent fellow; descended from the Montecuculis of Ferrara. One of his ancestors poisoned a Dauphin of France, and was torn to pieces for it by four horses, ever so many centuries ago."

"He did no such thing," said Saxon. "The Dauphin died of inflammation brought on by his own imprudence; and Montecuculi was barbarously murdered. It was always so in those hateful middle ages. When a prince died, his physicians invariably proclaimed that he was poisoned; and then some wretched victim was sure to be broken on the wheel, or torn to pieces."

"The physicians did it to excuse their want of skill, I suppose," remarked the Earl.

"Or else because princes were too august to catch colds and fevers, like other men."

"There spoke the republican."

"But where is this Montecuculi?"

"Shut up with Signor Colonna, in his den. He brings important news from the seat of war; but at present I only know that Garibaldi has achieved some brilliant success, and that our guests are leaving us in all haste."

"What, the Colonnas?"

"Yes, the Colonnas."

"But not to-day?"

"This evening, immediately after dinner."

Saxon's countenance fell.

"That is quick work," said he. "Where are they going?"

"To London."

"Is anything the matter?"

"Nothing—except that a Genoese deputy is hourly expected, and our friends are summoned to meet him."

"Then they will come back to you again?"

"Not a chance of it. The present is an important crisis, and we have a whole round of special committees and public meetings coming on in London and elsewhere. No—we shall not see them down again at Castletowers this year. They will have more than enough of active work on hand for the next week or two; and then, no doubt, they will be off to Italy."

Saxon was silent. Having once resolved on a course of action, it was not in him to be turned aside by small obstacles; and he was now thinking how, in the midst of all this hurry of departure, he should obtain his interview with Miss Colonna.

"This place will be as lively as a theatre by daylight when you are all gone," observed the Earl, presently.

"You must come up to town," replied Saxon. "I had a note from Burgoyne this morning, in which he says that London is fuller than ever."

Lord Castletowers shook his head.

"I shall run up occasionally for a few hours at a time," said he, "while these meetings are being held; but I shall not be able to make any stay."

"Why not?"

"Because I cannot afford it."

"Nonsense! What do you mean?"

"Simply what I say. I am a poor man, my dear fellow—which fact, I believe, you have heard me state before—and although I look upon a good London hotel as the first stage on the road to Paradise, and upon a fortnight in town during the best of the season as pure beatitude, I can seldom afford to indulge my taste for either."

"But I should have thought, with a place like this"

"That's just what it is!" replied the Earl, knocking off the ash from his cigar, and rocking himself dismally to and fro. "It's a dear old place, and I wouldn't exchange it for Aladdin's palace of jewels; but it costs me every farthing of my income merely to live in it. I was left,

you see, with an encumbered estate; and, in order to clear it, I was obliged to sell three of the best little farms in the county. I even sold a slice of the old park, and that was the greatest sorrow of my life."

"I can well believe it," said Saxon.

"Consequently, I am now obliged to do the best I can with a large house and a small income."

"Still you have cleared off the encumbrances?"

The Earl nodded.

"All of them?"

"Yes, thank Heaven! all."

Saxon drew his chair a little nearer, and looked his friend earnestly in the face.

"Pray don't think me impertinent," said he; "but—but I've seen you looking anxious at times—and somehow I have fancied Would you mind telling me, Castletowers, if you have really any trouble on your mind? Any outstanding claim, for instance, that—that . . ."

"That a generous fellow like yourself could help me to meet? No, Trefalden—not one. I thank you heartily for your kind thought, but I owe no man a penny."

Saxon drew a deep breath of satisfaction. He would scarcely have liked to confess, even to himself, with how keen a sense of relief he found his cousin's statement corroborated.

"I rejoice to hear it," he replied. "And now, Castletowers, you must promise that you will go up with me the day after to-morrow, and make my rooms your hotel. I have three there in St. James's-street, and I can have a couple more if I like; and you don't know how lonely I feel in them."

"You are good nature itself," said the Earl; "but indeed"

"It's not good nature—it's pure selfishness. I like London. I am intensely interested in its multitudinous life and intellectual activity; but it is a terrible place to live in all alone. If, however, I had a couple of rooms which I might call your rooms, and which I knew you would occupy whenever you were in town, the place would seem more like home to me."

"But, my dear fellow"

"One moment, please! I know, of course, that it is, in one sense, a monstrous presumption on my part to ask you to do this. You are an English peer, and I am a Swiss peasant; but then you have received me here as your guest, and treated me as if I were your equal"

"Trefalden, hear me," interrupted the Earl, vehemently. "You know my political creed—you know that, setting friendship, virtue, education aside, I hold all men to be literally and absolutely equal under heaven?"

"Yes, as an abstract principle"

"Precisely so—as an abstract principle. But abstract and concrete are two very different things; and permit me to tell you that I have the honour and happiness of knowing two men who, so far as I am competent to judge myself and them, are as immeasurably superior to me in all that constitutes true nobility, as if there were no such principle as equality under the sun. And those two men are Giulio Colonna and Saxon Trefalden."

Saxon laughed and coloured up.

"What reply can I make to such a magnificent compliment?" said he.

"Beg my pardon, I should think, for the speech that provoked it."

"But do you really mean it?"

"Every word of it."

"Then I will go up to town a day sooner, and prepare your rooms at once. If that's your opinion of me, you can't refuse to grant the first favour I have ever asked at your hands."

The Earl smiled and shook his head.

"We will talk of that by-and-by," he said. "If I have not acceded at once, it is through no want of confidence in your friendship."

"I should look upon it as a strong proof of yours," said Saxon.

"I came to your room to-day, Trefalden, to give you a much stronger proof of it," replied the Earl, gravely.

The words were simple enough, but something in the tone in which they were uttered arrested Saxon's attention.

"You may be sure that I shall value it, whatever it may be," said he; and waited for Lord Castletowers to proceed.

But the Earl was, apparently, in no haste to do so. Swaying idly to and fro, and watching the light smoke of his cigar, he remained for some moments silent, as if hesitating how and where to begin. At length he said:

"I do believe, Trefalden, that you are the best fellow breathing."

"That I certainly am not," replied Saxon; "so pray don't think it."

"But I do think it; and it is just because I think it that I am here now. I want to tell you something."

Saxon bent his head, and listened.

"Something which I have been keeping to myself for years, because—well, because I have never had a friend to whom I could confide it—I mean a really intimate friend whom I could trust, as I know I may trust you."

"Thank you," said Saxon, simply.

"I have felt the want of such an one, bitterly," continued the Earl. "It's hard to be for ever brooding over one idea, without being able to seek sympathy or counsel."

"I should think it must be," replied Saxon; "but I've never had a secret of my own."

"Then, my dear fellow," said the Earl, throwing away the end of his cigar with a very gloomy look, "you have never been in love."

Saxon made no reply. He had fully anticipated some confidence on the subject of money, and his friend's rejoinder took him by surprise.

Had he been asked, he could not have told why it was so; but the surprise, somehow, was not a pleasant one.

"The truth is, Trefalden," said the Earl, "I am a very unlucky, and a very miserable fellow. I love a woman whom I have no hope of marrying."

"How is that?"

"Because I am poor, and she has nothing—because I could not bear to act in opposition to my mother's wishes—because . . . in short, because the woman I love is Olimpia Colonna."

Saxon's heart gave one throb—just one—as Castletowers spoke the name; and then his breath seemed to come short, and he was afraid to speak, lest his voice should be unsteady.

"Had you guessed my secret?" asked the Earl.

Saxon shook his head.

"I feel sure my mother has guessed it, long since; but she has entire confidence in my honour, and has never breathed a syllable to me on the subject. All her hope is, that I may repair our shattered fortunes by a wealthy marriage. Proud as she is—and my mother is a very proud woman, Trefalden—she would rather see me marry that rich Miss Hatherton whose father was a common miner, than Olimpia Colonna with her eight hundred years of glorious ancestry!"

"Eight hundred years!" repeated Saxon, mechanically.

"It is one of the noblest families in Europe," continued the Earl. "The Colonnas were sovereign Dukes and Princes when the Pierrepoints were Norman Counts, and the Wynncliffes simple Esquires. They have given many Cardinals to Rome, and one Pope. They have repeatedly held the rank of Viceroys of Naples, Sicily, and Aragon; and they have numbered among them some of the greatest generals and noblest scholars of the middle ages. I tell you, Trefalden, it is incomprehensible to me how my mother, who attaches such profound importance to birth, should weigh gold against blood in such a question as this!"

He paused, beating the floor with his foot, and too much absorbed in his own story to pay much heed to his listener.

"But then, you see," he continued presently, "money is not the only obstacle. The man who marries Olimpia Colonna must go heart and soul, hand and fortune, into the Italian cause. I would do it, willingly. I would melt my last ounce of plate, cut down my last timber, mortgage the roof over my head, if I had only myself to consider. But how is it possible? I cannot reduce my mother to beggary."

"Of course not."

And then there was another pause. At length the Earl looked up suddenly, and said,

"Well now, Trefalden, what is your advice?"

"Advice!" stammered Saxon. "You ask me for advice?"

"Undoubtedly."

"But how can I advise you?"

"Simply by telling me what you think I ought to do. Should I, for instance, talk it over with my mother, or speak to Colonna first? He is her oldest friend, and his opinion has great weight with her. There lies my chief hope. If he were with me, I do not think she would persist in any lengthened opposition. Besides, I would do anything to make up for Olimpia's want of fortune. I know I could work my way in parliament, if I chose to read up facts, and study home-questions. Or I would cultivate my influential friends, and try to get some foreign diplomatic appointment. In short, give me but the motive, and I will do anything!"

"But these are matters of which I know nothing," said Saxon.

"I am not asking you how I shall push my way in the future, my dear fellow," replied the Earl, eagerly; "but how you think I ought to act in the present. What would you do yourself, if you were in my position?"

Saxon, sitting a little away from the light, with his elbow resting on the table and his head supported by his hand, looked down thoughtfully, and hesitated before replying. His friend had given him a hard problem to solve—a bitter task to perform.

"Are you sure that you love her?" he said, presently, speaking somewhat slowly.

"As sure as that yonder sun is now shining in the heavens! Why, Trefalden, she was the ideal of my boyhood; and for the last four years, since she has been staying with us so often, and for so many months at a time, I have loved her with the deepest love that man can give to woman."

"And do you think that—that she loves you?"

Do what he would, Saxon could not quite keep down the tremor in his voice as he asked this question; but the Earl was too intensely preoccupied to observe it.

"A year ago—nay, three months ago," said he, "I was certain of it. Latterly, I cannot tell why, there has been a constraint—a coldness—as if she were trying to crush out the feeling from her own heart, and the hope from mine. And yet, somehow, I feel as if the change went no deeper than the surface."

"You believe, in short, that Miss Colonna loves you still?"

"By Heaven, Trefalden, I do!" replied the Earl, passionately.

"You have not asked her?"

"Certainly not. She was my guest."

Saxon covered his eyes for a moment with his hand, as if in profound thought. It was an eventful moment—a cruel moment—the first moment of acute suffering that he had ever known. No one but himself ever knew how sharp a fight he fought while it lasted—a fight from which he came out wounded and bleeding, but a conqueror. When he lifted up his face, it was pale to the very lips, but steady and resolved.

"Then, Castletowers," he said—and his voice had no faltering in it—"I will tell you what I would do if—if I were in your place. I would learn the truth from her own lips, first of all."

"But my mother"

"Lady Castletowers will acquiesce when she knows that your happiness is involved. It is but a question of fortune, after all."

The Earl sprang to his feet, and began pacing to and fro.

"It is welcome counsel," said he. "If I only dared—if I were but sure and yet, is it not better to know the worst at once?"

"Far better," replied Saxon, drearily.

Lord Castletowers went over to the window, and leaned out into the sunshine.

"Why should I not?" he mused, half aloud. "If I fail, I shall be no poorer than I am now—except in hope. Except in hope! But if I succeed Ah! if I succeed!"

His face grew radiant at the thought.

"Yes, Trefalden," he exclaimed, "you are right. Why set myself to overcome so many obstacles if, when all is done, I am to find that I have had my toil for nothing? I *will* ask her. I will ask her this very day—this very hour, if I can find her alone. It will be no breach of hospitality to do so now. Thanks, my dear fellow—thanks, a thousand times!"

Saxon shook his head.

"You have nothing to thank me for, Castletowers," he replied.

"'For your counsel,' said the Earl.

"Which may bring you sorrow, remember."

"Then for your friendship!"

"Well, yes—for my friendship. You have that, if it is worth your thanks."

"Time will show what value I place upon it," replied the Earl. "And now, for the present, adieu. I know you wish me success."

With this, he grasped Saxon warmly by the hand, and hurried from the room. When the last echo of his foot had died away on stair and corridor, the young man went over to the door, locked it, and sat quietly down, alone with his trouble.

And it was, in truth, no light or imaginary trouble. He saw, clearly enough, that he must accept one of two things—both equally bitter. Either Olimpia Colonna had never loved him, or he had supplanted his friend in her affections. Which was it? His heart told him.

ETNA AWAKE.

Travelling in Sicily not far from Catania, and it being announced to us that lava was issuing from Mount Etna, we started with two guides to see the spectacle. Fortunately the spot where the liquid rolled out was on the verge of a piece of level ground, so that though the quantity which came pouring out was very great, its progress appeared to be slow; but in a few hours it had spread so far, that, finding there was no appearance of a relaxation of the activity of the mountain, the people who lived on its sides in a line with the direction which the lava was taking, were seized with the wildest terror. This we found to increase as we ascended the mountain, and was heightened by the statements of the charcoal-burners and others who were employed in the higher regions, and who had been compelled to fly before the burning torrent. It was a dreadful sight. The whole of that side of the mountain where the lava was descending seemed to be on fire; tremendous explosions shook the ground, and in the villages we passed through the people were all out of doors; some crying and praying to the Virgin and saints of various denominations for help in their affliction, others blaspheming as if the vocabulary of oaths among them were inexhaustible. To this uproar was added the sharp clang of bells ringing from the numerous churches and convents, under the absurd impression that this noise would check the progress of the eruption. Processions headed by priests in their vestments, carrying images of saints, on their way up the mountain, were frequently seen. Yet the lava continued to descend in obedience to that law which causes all fluids to seek a level; for neither the saintly images nor adjurations checked its progress. Still we were told of some remarkable instances of the course of a stream of lava having been changed by a few trees. In one instance, some trees at the entrance of a narrow gulley prevented the lava from entering, and thus saved a large amount of property which would otherwise have been entirely at its mercy. It was not owing to the trees being planted closely together, but is supposed to be due to the repelling force of the vapour which issued from them; where, however, trees stood in such a position that the molten liquid could reach them, it made short work of them; it shrivelled the leaves, bit deeper and deeper into the trunk, which its weight finally overthrew, and what was once a flourishing orchard of olive-trees could only be distinguished by charred trunks.

Frequently during our ascent we met people coming down with loads on their heads; others not only carrying loads themselves, but bringing down laden mules. As we ascended, the grandeur of the spectacle increased; but to get a full and comprehensive view of the eruption, one ought to have been above it, or in a balloon, the number of channels into which it was divided rendering it impossible for a person on the side of the mountain to see more than a portion of the streams. According to those whose judgment can be best relied on, the volume of lava vomited forth during the first six days was at the rate of eighteen thousand cubic feet per minute, and its advance near the mouths at the rate of as many feet in the same time. The further from the orifice, the less the velocity; but of course this depended principally on the slope of the ground. In some places it moved downwards with alarming rapidity; in others its progress was barely perceptible. The width of the principal current varied at one time from three hundred to five hundred yards, and its depth was estimated at fifteen yards. This enormous torrent of liquid fire plunged down a precipice fifty feet in depth in the form of a cataract, until it entirely filled the basin into which it fell, and gradually raised it to a level with the side of the mountain, the surplus portion, which continued to flow over it, running away down the bed of a river. Fortunately lava solidifies with so much rapidity on contact with the atmosphere, that the further it proceeds from the place whence it is erupted, the slower its progress becomes,

until motion finally ceases altogether, and the fresh matter which comes forth finds it a barrier.

The most magnificent spectacle of all, however, during this eruption, was when the fiery torrent reached a forest composed chiefly of some hundred thousand oak, pine, and chesnut trees. Gradually, the lava ceased to flow, and the general opinion was that the eruption was at an end, and there was no further cause of fear, when, all of a sudden, it burst forth with greater violence than ever; but from an opening on the western slope of the mountain; and speedily spread over a district which had till that time escaped with trifling damage, presenting the appearance of a lake of fire. Long after this second eruption was at an end, and the surface had hardened, an opening here and there enabled one to see that the mass below it was still in a molten condition, and in some places the surface might be seen rising and falling like the sea when there is a gentle swell. This was probably caused by the gases generated below being unable to find a vent.

But though the serious eruption was at an end, the mountain was far from quiet; a prolonged rumbling sound was followed by an explosion, which threw large quantities of stones and ashes in the air, mingled with dense masses of vapour, which, on being liberated, expanded into enormous volumes, and floated away into the atmosphere. The din and uproar could hardly have been equalled if the Cyclops of old had been still hard at work there with thousands of Nasmyth's steam hammers. The extent of the atmosphere is such that we can hardly admit that it can be affected by any quantity of gas that can be poured into it from any source; yet it does not seem improbable that the incalculable quantity of poisonous gases which have issued from the mountain since it commenced active operations must have been sufficient to affect injuriously the health of the inhabitants over a large district.

An anecdote current respecting a German who ascended the mountain and looked into the interior through one of the openings, will assist in conveying the impression it produces on those who follow his example. He was seen ascending the mountain alone, and, after an absence of several hours, returned; yet not a word would he utter in reply to the questions addressed to him. The next day he was found drowned on the edge of the sea. According to the statement of a friend of his, he had long meditated suicide, and it is supposed that he had ascended the mountain with the intention of throwing himself into the molten lava, after the fashion of the well-remembered man of old, whose suicide was discovered by the mountain throwing out his sandal, but that the German's mind was so overpowered by the horrors of the scene he witnessed, that he could not carry out his intention, and descended to find a grave in a cooler and more tranquil fluid.

The effect produced by the decomposition of water during a volcanic eruption may be gathered from an occurrence which took place about twenty-five years ago. A large number of persons had assembled to watch the descent of a current of lava, when, all of a sudden, the end of it was seen to swell into a huge dome. A terrific explosion instantly ensued, which scattered an immense quantity of burning vapour and red-hot stones in every direction. Nearly seventy persons were killed, and every object in the neighbourhood levelled with the ground. The cause was attributed to one of the residents having omitted to let the water run out of his tank. Ever since that time, one of the first things a man does after he has decided on abandoning his house, is to empty his reservoirs of water.

We observe from the newspapers that Etna is still fearfully and dangerously awake.

COLONEL AND MRS. CHUTNEY.

IN FIVE CHAPTERS. CHAPTER IV.

THE day but one after the events last recorded, Sir Frederic Samperton, M.P., had prepared himself for his morning ride, and was seated at his new davenport, making one or two entries in his note-book, and issuing directions to a smooth valet who stood respectfully beside him.

Sir Frederic's chambers were not only luxuriously furnished, but in excellent taste. The pictures were few; busts and statuettes abounded, and if some of the latter would have appeared unsuitable in a lady's boudoir, their classical grace redeemed them from being too suggestive. There were books, and looking-glasses, and a few pieces of rare china. On the whole, a slightly feminine tone pervaded the apartment, which yet contrasted strongly with the owner's appearance.

Sir Frederic Samperton was a tall, large man, eminently English and aristocratic, with small hands and feet. No moustaches, but long tawny whiskers, and keen grey eyes. He was a healthy, well-tempered man, with large credit as a "good fellow." He never offended any one; never was known to have lost anything by feelings displayed in any particular direction. He was peculiarly alive to beauty in every form, and a little eager in the pursuit of a new whim. As a public man, he adopted a business aspect and common-sense tone; which, like most of his adaptations, answered very well.

"This is a much more convenient davenport than the first they sent me—there was no room in it for anything," he said. "This one looks better too. Don't you think so, Bowles?"

"Much better, Sir Frederic."

"Let me know if the horses are at the door." The valet left the room, and Samperton continued to open and examine various drawers with a thoughtful air. "It's very odd," he murmured at last. "I can't find that promissory note. Where the deuce can I have put it?" pulling his whiskers meditatively. "What an infernal young scamp to let me in for fifty pounds, and I haven't met him three times. Forgery too! Men ought not to ask these

unknown fellows to meet gentlemen, because they sing a good song, or——"

The valet re-entered holding a salver on which lay a note. "Lady waiting for an answer, sir."

"Lady," said Sir Frederic, startled. "Young?"

"Well, sir, a youngish lady. Black dress, thick veil, speaks nervous-like."

"She may go," said Sir Frederic. "I will send an answer—or, stop! I may as well see what she says." And, opening the note, he read:

"'Though I have not the honour of knowing you, I venture to ask for a few minutes of your valuable time. I am a connexion of Colonel Chutney, and trust you will receive me for his sake.'

"What has old Chutney been up to?" asked the baronet of himself. "Show the lady in."

The servant left the room, and returned, ushering in Mary Holden. As she threw back her veil, and her eyes met those of the baronet, she started as if inclined to run away, and then exclaimed only half aloud: "Sir Frederic Samperton? I am so surprised. So sorry!"

"Sorry?" said Sir Frederic, insinuatingly, "for the fulfilment of my most ardent hopes."

"Because," returned Mary, strong in her purpose, and recovering herself, "I spoke to you heedlessly and giddily the other day; and, now that I come to you with an anxious heart, you will not perhaps treat me with"—she paused, blushed, and hesitated—"with the gravity which——"

"What the deuce is she at?" thought Samperton, while he interrupted her with much deference of manner. "Whatever you do me the honour of communicating, will receive my serious and respectful attention."

"Thank you, thank you!" said Mary, much relieved, her bright frank smile lighting up eye and brow; "you put me at my ease." The baronet, suppressing all signs of admiration, handed her a chair, and taking one himself, waited for her to speak.

"I hardly know how to begin," said Mary; "but Mrs. Chutney is my first cousin;" Sir Frederic bowed; "and more—a very dear friend." An embarrassed pause. "Mrs. Chutney's name was Bousfield. Observe, Bousfield."

"Ah!" said Sir Frederic.

"I see," continued Mary; "yes—the—the wretched boy who forged your name to that terrible bill is my cousin, Louisa's only brother."

"No, really! What an unpleasant relative! But I presume Chutney will pay up. I will direct my lawyer to communicate with the colonel before proceedings are commenced."

"Proceedings!" repeated Mary, half rising in an agony of eagerness. "Oh, Sir Frederic! Colonel Chutney must know nothing whatever about it. Promise me this, on your honour."

"Really," replied Samperton, smiling, "I should be sorry to disoblige you, but——"

"I do not ask you to lose the money," said Mary, eagerly. "I only ask for time, and it shall be repaid."

"I must say that seems extremely problematical. What security have I? You will excuse this business-like question. What security can your cousin offer?"

Mary anxiously exclaimed, "Mine! It may take a long time to pay it. I have been calculating. I could manage to pay you fifteen pounds a year, and," hanging her head rather sadly, "that would take more than three years."

"And your worthless cousin would get off scot free," said Sir Frederic, gazing at her with admiration.

"Oh! I think he would help me. At any rate, it would be better than to let his sister suffer. She has borne so much; and now, when she is just beginning to learn how to manage the colonel, it would be sad to have her thrown back; she does so want to make her husband love her."

"What a remarkable woman!" observed the baronet.

"Yes," returned Mary, with sincerity. "I tell her she is very foolish; for the more you want a man to do anything, the more he won't do it."

"I see you are a keen observer."

"Oh! Sir Frederic, this may be play to you, it will be death to me. Promise me a year's time, at any rate," putting forward her hand imploringly.

Samperton clasped it in both of his, exclaiming, "I can refuse you nothing. Let us trouble ourselves no more about this worthless young scamp. We'll have a little dinner at Richmond together, talk the matter over, and take a stroll in the park afterwards! Richmond Park looks lovely these May evenings. It does, I assure you!"

Mary disengaged her hand, and went on without deigning to notice Sir Frederic's invitation: "Surely you are chivalrous enough to yield time for paying this money, to save a timid woman from blushing before her husband for her next of kin!"

She had scarcely uttered the words, when Sir Frederic's servant entered hastily.

"Colonel Chutney and Captain Peake coming up, sir!" he said.

"By Jove, how awkward! My dear girl, you had better go into the inner room; they will not stay long, and you can escape after they are gone."

Mary turned very pale. "No, no," she said; "I had best be brave. Concealment looks like guilt." She involuntarily drew back as Chutney and his friend came in.

"Brought a friend of mine to ask your parliamentary interest, Sir Frederic," began the colonel. He suddenly stopped short as if choked, and exclaimed: "Bless my soul! Mary Holden? Why, what brings you here, Mary?"

"Urgent private affairs," returned Mary, trying to assume a tone of badinage, while she coloured to the roots of her hair. "And now I have to thank you, Sir Frederic, for your

courtesy to a total stranger, and shall intrude no longer." She tried to pass Colonel Chutney as she spoke, but he stopped her.

"Come, come," he said, sternly, "I have a right to demand an explanation of your presence here. I am not going to allow my wife's nearest female relative to peril her fair fame without knowing the reason why."

"Sir!" returned Mary, indignant, frightened, yet striving gallantly for self-possession. "Has your friend Sir Frederic Samperton fallen so low in your estimation that a lady cannot seek a business interview with him without suspicion?"

"Don't talk nonsense to me," retorted the colonel, now in one of his passions. "I'll have the whole truth out. I'll lock you up. I'll hand you over to your aunt!"

"Pray, Colonel Chutney, exercise a little self-control," said Samperton, mildly; "but, above all, as this young lady justly observes, do not asperse my character."

Peake also suggested that the affair was, he felt sure, perfectly explicable.

"I do not believe a word of it," shouted Chutney, now scarlet with rage. Turning to Mary, he added: "And you—I think you ought to be ashamed of yourself."

"I do not care what you think," returned Mary; "I know I have nothing to be ashamed of. I shall not break my heart if no one believes me." And she burst into tears.

"*I* believe you, Miss Holden," said Captain Peake, soothingly, coming to her side; he would have said more if he had known what to say, but he didn't.

"Let me go away," wept Mary. "I will explain nothing."

"Yes, I'll take you away, and see you safe home," cried the colonel, seizing her. "Peake, you must tell your story about your seamen and their prize money to Samperton yourself. As for you, Sir Frederic, I'll see you to-morrow."

Colonel Chutney then departed, vindictively leading out the culprit.

CHAPTER V.

THE next evening Mrs. Chutney sat alone in the library, expecting the return of her lord to dinner, and hoping earnestly he would fulfil his intention of bringing Captain Peake with him, a tête-à-tête under existing circumstances being a trial which was almost more than her weakened nerves could bear.

Mrs. Chutney looked very pale; traces of tears dimmed her soft eyes. She had passed a most distressing day. She had been early despatched to extract the truth from Mary Holden, who had been left in durance vile with the redoubtable Aunt Barbara. But tears and caresses were as unavailing as threats. Mary seemed to harden under Miss Bousfield's taunts and reproaches. Poor Mrs. Chutney was in despair; fluctuating between her unbounded confidence in, and admiration of, her cousin, and the undoubted evidence of her indiscretion—for Mary admitted that her unknown admirer proved to be Sir Frederic Samperton; a fact which, although Mrs. Chutney carefully suppressed, filled up the measure of her uneasiness. Mary herself too, though angry, and putting on a bold front, was, Mrs. Chutney could see, frightened and anxious. "If she would but open her heart to me!" thought the tearful Louisa. "It must be something very strange, or she would tell me. I trust it will all come right by Tuesday next, or I do not know how I shall manage the dinner—perhaps, indeed, the colonel will put Sir Frederic off, though he has fixed the day himself."

At this point in her cogitations a ring at the hall-door bell set her heart beating. She glanced at the clock. Ten minutes to six—it was Colonel Chutney, of course, and she shuddered in anticipation of the well-known cloud upon his brow, and inevitable outbreak of indignation with which, whatever and whoever first encountered him, would be greeted. It was, therefore, a certain relief, though a great surprise, when "Mr. Adolphus Deal" was announced; especially as that gentleman presented himself in accurate evening costume—a waistcoat with jewelled buttons, elaborate shirt-front, a mere thread of a white tie, patent leather boots, and a crush hat.

"He has evidently come to dine," Mrs. Chutney thought. "Some mistake. How *shall* I get rid of him before Colonel Chutney arrives?" She then advanced a step or two, and said interrogatively, with an air of polite surprise,

"Mr. Deal?"

"Yes," replied the exquisite upholsterer, with a smile and bow; both marred by nervousness. "I am here in obedience to your lightest wish. I have selected the earliest moment you named, and trusted to your delicate tact to manage everything—all—a—in short—all serene."

"Mad!" thought Louisa. "I am sure, Mr. Deal," she said aloud, "I am much obliged by the promptitude with which you have executed all our orders; but did you not get a note from me this morning, in which I explained that——?"

Deal foresaw something uncomfortable, and stammered hastily, "No, I received no second communication."

"I really do not understand you," said Mrs. Chutney, almost peevishly. "But, after sending you that note on Monday, I found that I had unconsciously mistaken——"

"Then he does *not* dine out to-day?" interrupted Deal, eagerly. "But fear not, I shall vanish at your slightest wish. Perish every consideration except your happiness!"

This dramatic burst bewildered Mrs. Chutney more than ever. "You see," she returned incoherently, "I put them into wrong envelopes, and saw immediately the danger of Colonel Chutney discovering the error—in short, Mr. Deal, he is rather peculiar, and I wish you would be so good as to go away."

"I am gone," replied Adolphus, with what he intended for an air of chivalrous devotion.

"Yes, do go; you can call to-morrow, you know, about the ottoman."

"The ottoman?" Adolphus laughed satirically. "Oh! woman in thine hour of ease——"

"There, pray be calm, my dear sir," cried Mrs. Chutney, now convinced of his insanity, and greatly alarmed. "But oh," she continued, in despair, "that is his ring! And if he sees you, I would hardly answer for your life, or mine either."

"Put me somewhere—anywhere! Dispose of me as you will," said Deal, with an uncomfortable recollection of the stout frame and irate temperament of the coming veteran; and he turned hastily to the library door.

"No, no," whispered Mrs. Chutney, eagerly, "not there. Go into the garden. John," she continued to the page, "show Mr. Deal into the garden. Then, after your master is safe in, take him the key of the lower gate. Make haste—oh! do make haste."

In the midst of his dread and timidity Adolphus dropped his hat, and made an ineffectual effort to recover it. "Do not delay, Mr. Deal—pray do not," implored Mrs. Chutney; and the next moment the French window leading to the garden closed upon the hatless upholsterer.

A second furious ring at the bell, and Mrs. Chutney retreating hastily towards her fauteuil, tripped over the lost head-gear, picked it up, and dropped it into an obscure corner between the window and the piano, where the ample curtains effectually concealed it.

Colonel Chutney entered, seething with wrath. He wiped his brow and took a turn up and down the room, unable to find words sufficiently expressive of his indignation, while Mrs. Chutney sat trembling. In this condition violent-tempered people consider they are calm, turbulently insisting that they are so. When the words came that the colonel had been vainly seeking for, he spoke them slowly and solemnly: "Look here, Mrs. Chutney, I have been kept five minutes at that infernal door with the sun blazing full upon me! How can a man stand these repeated insults? Insults I call them, by Jove! when a man's wishes are disregarded, and—and——"

"Well, never mind, dear," said Mrs. Chutney, in a soothing tone, and nerving herself with the hope that her difficulties were nearly over. "Go up and wash your hands. There is such a nice curry for dinner."

"That is all very well," replied the husband, suspiciously, "but I would lay two to one you have forgotten the cocoa-nut!"

"You have lost, then," cried his wife, attempting a playful tone. "Come"—trying to snatch a kiss—"I consider you owe me a pair of gloves."

The colonel, a good deal surprised, submitted awkwardly, and, slightly mollified, continued his quarter-deck walk over the carpet. "Now, Louisa," he began, "what have you done with Mary to-day?"

"Nothing, dear. I could make nothing of her. Not a single syllable of explanation could I extract from her. So I begged Aunt Barbara to bring her over to dinner."

"You have? Then you have done very wrong. I have asked Peake; and as I do not wish him to be dragged into the same miserable position I have been, I should prefer——" here he stopped short and stared fixedly at the windows. "I say," observed the colonel, intensely, "*look* at those blinds; one of them is a foot higher than the other. How any right-minded person with an eye in head can endure such a dreadful obliquity, is more than I can fathom." He began to untwist the cord, when he again made a sudden pause and looked out intently into the garden. "Who is that lunatic walking about without his hat?" he asked, at last. "Gad, it's Deal, the upholsterer. What the deuce is Deal doing there?"

"It is all over," thought the wretched Louisa, her heart sinking within her.

"John," shouted Colonel Chutney to the page, "come here"—pointing to the garden. "Who *is* that maniac?" John appeared like magic, troubled with a bad cough, and looked to his mistress for directions. She shook her head despairingly. John's cough got worse.

"Stop that confounded hacking!" cried the colonel, sternly, "and come here. Look! Tell me, who is that in the garden?"

"Please, sir," returned the page, with an air of unhesitating certainty, "that, sir? that's Miss Jemimar Ann, as lives at Number Twenty—her young man. I see him often of a evening walking under her balcony, and he never do wear his 'at."

"Do you mean to tell me you do not recognise him as that ridiculous idiot, Deal, the upholsterer?"

"Well, sir," looking out carefully, and with a tone of great candour, "now I look closer, it *is* Mr. Deal."

"There is some infernal mischief here," cried the colonel, a dark suspicion rushing to his brain. "Why was I kept so long at the door? Why—why—Mrs. Chutney?"

"My dear Felix, believe me——"

"I will believe nothing! Go, John, go this moment, and bring me that wretched imbecile. I will get to the bottom of this, and if I find you have been compromising me with expensive orders, I will post a warning against you in all the public papers to-morrow."

The colonel paused for want of breath, the page rushed away to execute his wishes, and poor Mrs. Chutney, roused to indignation at last, stood silently watching the scene, unutterably humiliated at being placed in such a position for so insufficient a cause. The colonel threw open the window, and, regardless of public opinion, shouted out his directions and orders in stentorian tones.

Meanwhile, the wretched Adolphus, finding the garden gate locked, had lingered about in search of succour, and his hat. On first seeing John flying with the most ostentatious speed, he imagined he was coming to his aid, and hastened to meet him, till warned by an injunc-

tion from the faithful page, in as loud a tone as he dared, "to cut t'other way! I'm sent to catch ye alive;" whercupon Deal, his wits sharpened by a dread of Colonel Chutney's wrath, and a suspicion that (as he would himself have phrased it) he was in the "wrong box," turned sharply and dived down another walk; while, under shelter of a friendly tree, the page unlocked and left open the garden gate, then rushed towards Deal, shouting to him to come "back, as master wanted him."

The colonel stood at the half-open window in his eagerness, and Mrs. Chutney, fearing the neighbours' comments, endeavoured to drag him back. "That's right, John! dodge under the willow-tree, and you will have him! Double round the mignonette plot. Turn his flank by the garden-seat. Police! police!"

"For Heaven's sake, Colonel Chutney," said his wife, alarmed and scandalised at these outcries, "compose yourself! People will think you mad!"

By this time several smart parlour-maids had assembled at both the back and front entrances, with friendly messages to inquire if the house had been robbed; if "master could be of any use;" "if missis should come and stay with Mrs. Chutney," who was popularly supposed to be in violent hysterics after witnessing a desperate hand to hand conflict between her husband and a truculent housebreaker.

In the midst of this excitement Captain Peake presented himself, with the intention of dining according to invitation with the hospitable owners of the house.

Mrs. Chutney, now thoroughly roused to self-assertion, had surmounted a strong inclination to a fit of crying, and received Captain Peake with wonderful composure. "What is the matter?" asked that gentleman, with natural curiosity. "There's a bevy of uncommon smart girls in caps on the door-steps, and they say Chutney has been obliged to cut somebody's throat in self-defence. Where is your cousin, Miss Holden?"

"Thank Heaven!" returned Mrs. Chutney, "there is one sane individual in the house at last! Captain Peake, I can explain this matter in a few words, and the colonel will not hear me."

Captain Peake looked much distressed, and pulled his long moustaches meditatively, as the colonel panted on a chair, flushed and heated from unusual exertion:

"Sorry to give you so strange a reception, Peake," he said, in an injured tone; "but I have partly unearthed a disgraceful mystery of some kind."

"Come, come, Chutney, you are in a passion, and will not hear reason. Let Mrs. Chutney explain."

"Two days ago," said Mrs. Chutney, quietly, "at the colonel's request I wrote to Sir Frederic Samperton, asking him to dine here to-day, or to name any other day on which he could dine with us, and I stupidly put his note into an envelope directed to Mr. Deal, at the same time enclosing a note intended for Mr. Deal about the exchange of an ottoman, to Sir Frederic. Mr. Deal consequently thought he was invited to dinner, and arrived at six o'clock. While I, knowing Colonel Chutney's irritability and impatience with my short-comings, foolishly strove to hide my mistake by sending Deal into the garden."

Further explanation was cut short by the abrupt entrance of Miss Bousfield, who dragged rather than led Mary Holden after her.

Poor Mary looked much less brilliant than usual. Her cheeks were pale, and a dark shade under the eyes bespoke fatigue or anxiety. Still the mouth looked resolute, and the large speaking eyes were even brighter than ever in their sadness.

Mrs. Chutney stepped forward hastily and warmly embraced the culprit, who endeavoured to brush away a tear furtively.

"There," said Miss Bousfield, "is a reception for a modest woman to give one with—with a cloud on her reputation, to say the least."

"Aunt Barbara!" cried Mary, stung to self-possession by this coarse attack. "I know you will try to degrade and insult me in every way; but, for all that, the motives which took me to Sir Frederic's chambers were pure and good."

"Nevertheless, you don't like to disclose them," said Miss Bousfield, sneeringly.

"Excuse me, Miss Bousfield," said Colonel Chutney, solemnly, "but I have some very queer suspicions—there's some ugly work going on somewhere. Now, Miss Mary! you decline positively to say what business took you to Sir Frederic Samperton's; will you assure me it was not in any way connected with Mrs. Chutney?"

"With me?" exclaimed his wife.

"Mrs. Chutney was perfectly unacquainted with my visit, or its object," replied Mary, steadily.

"Oh!" cried Miss Bousfield, exasperated to find how little her severity or condemnation was valued by her penniless niece. "You may say what you please, but it's my opinion that the truth isn't in you."

At this moment Colonel Chutney's eye was attracted by the corner of an envelope which peeped out of Mrs. Chutney's little work-basket Without more ado he drew it forth, and while Peake was trying to soothe the aunt and to comfort the niece, read its contents. Then, with a withering look of indignation, repeated it aloud:

"'My dear Mrs. Chutney.'

"Ha! Dear Mrs. Chutney would have been enough for all purposes of civility."

"'Your charming note'

"Oh, a charming note!"

"'has just reached me; quite in time to prevent any mischief.'

"Query, who was the bearer of that note, eh?" Here he glared at Mary with all his might.

"'Forgive me if I express a wish to trace in what direction your gentle thoughts could have been floating when you made the mistake.'

"What infernal nonsense! It isn't correct English, hang me if it is!"

"'It will give me infinite pleasure to accept your hospitality on Tuesday next. I well know Colonel Chutney's peculiarities.'

"Colonel Chut-ney's pe-cu-liarities. Ha! my peculiarities! What infernal impudence! Why, what peculiarities have I, I should like to know?"

"'Your secret is perfectly safe.'

"Is it? Egad! we'll worm it out, somehow."

"'Yours, as ever, most truly,
"'F. Samperton.'"

"Pray, Colonel Chutney," began his wife——

"Confound it, Mrs. Chutney! What *are* my peculiarities? Is this the way a man is to be discussed by the wife of his bosom, to—a man—a man about town?"

"Ah!" put in Miss Bousfield, still triumphantly, "there is a pair of them! I wash my hands of them. I never did expect gratitude! But I was fool enough to believe that creatures without any stake in the game would at least play fair."

"What have we to be grateful for?" asked Mary, composedly. "What have you ever done but look on, and prophesy evil, while strangers held out the rope to pull us struggling orphans through the surf of life?" To Colonel Chutney: "I had nothing to do with that note—my business was my own, and I do not choose to reveal it—let me go!" Bursting into tears: "I'll advertise to-morrow for a situation as governess to go abroad, to the colonies, or Kamschatka, and never come back again!"

"Stop a bit, Miss Holden," said Captain Peake, who had been edging closer to her.

"How dare you speak to me in that manner, you penniless chit?" cried her enraged aunt. "Do not you know I can cut you off with a shilling?"

"I may be penniless, Miss Bousfield," replied the niece, "but I am a capitalist for all that. I have my share of the great original capital—youth, health, industry, and patience. If I can provide for my own wants, I am as independent and as rich as Crœsus."

Captain Peake here made a timid exclamation, and, asking Mary to listen to him, drew her aside, and proceeded to whisper insinuatingly into her ear.

"Where is all this to end?" asked Chutney, observing this, and ceasing to pace the room in his fury. "What devilish schemes may not now be plotting under my very nose! But I will be blind no longer. No, by Jove, no! Your keys, madam! I'll see the contents of that davenport!"

Mrs. Chutney, still keeping an air of indifference, handed over her keys.

Colonel Chutney opened the davenport, and pulled out account-books, notes, papers, a ready reckoner, some half-finished embroidery, Johnson's Dictionary, receipts for various curries. "Ha! butcher's book—one fortnight unpaid! Baker's—a week owing! Robbed and betrayed, both. Madame Friselle's account unpaid!" He struck his hand vehemently on one side of the davenport, whereupon a secret drawer flew open. "Another paper," cried the distracted husband. "A man's writing! What is this?"—and he read:

"'London, May 18th, 186—
"'Two months after date I promise to pay to the order of Thomas Bousfield, Esq., Fifty Pounds, for value received.

"'Frederic Samperton.'"

"What is this? How came it here?"

"I have done with explanations," said Mrs. Chutney; "but I will say I was not aware that such a drawer as that existed."

"Good Heavens!" exclaimed Mary, "how *could* the bill have got there? Has dear Loo paid and concealed it?"

"Let me see," said Miss Bousfield, putting on her glasses and compressing her lips. "This is a strange business! A promissory note to Tom Bousfield, signed by——"

"Sir Frederic Samperton," announced the page, throwing open the door.

The fresh and smiling baronet appeared, like the genius of order and good breeding, to the conflicting assemblage.

"I am particularly anxious to assure you," addressing himself first to Mrs. Chutney, "that Miss Holden's visit of yesterday was simply——"

"Sir," interrupted Colonel Chutney, solemnly, and holding Sir Frederic's letter towards him, "this is no time for trifling. A question or two, if you please," striking open the epistle. "Is that your handwriting?"

"It looks like it."

"And here, sir, did you, or did you not, address this note to my wife?"

"I did, Colonel Chutney."

"Is that your signature?" continued the colonel, showing him Tom Bousfield's promissory note.

"That is a question I decline to answer," cried the astonished baronet. "But where did you find it? I have been hunting for it incessantly for the last four days."

"Lost or found, I suspect it to be a forgery," said Chutney. "A drop or two more or less of disgrace is of small importance in such a bumper as this," said the colonel, bitterly.

"Really, Chutney," began Samperton, in a tone of severe common sense, "you must excuse me, but I am a good deal surprised to see a man of your standing and knowledge of the world so knocked over by a simple contretemps. Mrs. Chutney very kindly invites me to dinner, at the same time she writes to Deal, Board, and Co. about some furniture, and puts the notes in wrong envelopes. I get Deal's billet, and write immediately to know what assistance I am expected to render in the case of your

ottoman. Mrs. Chutney writes to me again that it is all a mistake, but 'to say nothing about it, as you know how particular Colonel Chutney is.' I reply thus," pointing to the letter still held out by the colonel, who seemed transfixed.

"Well," said Captain Peake, rubbing his hands with an air of relief, "I think that is cleared up."

"But how about this?" said Colonel Chutney, slowly, and taking up the promissory note.

"Oh!" replied Samperton, in a tone of easy generosity, "that is easily settled. I could never think of wounding the feelings of this young man's charming relatives. The bill I must have put into the secret drawer when I exchanged the davenport for another I liked better. I have told my solicitor to stop proceedings for the present, and you will pay me the fifty pounds when convenient. Don't be in a hurry. Next week will do."

"What!" roared Colonel Chutney, "am I to be betrayed by my wife" (by this time Deal's hat had been kicked away from the curtains, and prompted a new and dreadful suspicion), "and fleeced by a worthless brother-in-law?"

Here Captain Peake, who had been doing nothing but whisper very eagerly into Mary Holden's ear, exclaimed aloud: "Yes, you must, to oblige me!" Then addressing Sir Frederic: "Miss Holden desires me to say she will be most happy to place fifty pounds to your credit at your banker's to-morrow morning, and so this unpleasant matter may be closed."

"Miss Holden has suddenly become rich," said the colonel, sarcastically.

"You accept my offer?" observed Peake, earnestly addressing Mary. "It is a mere trifle! Don't think twice about it."

"I do accept it! and I accept you too, you dear, kind, generous man," cried Mary, warmly, passing her arm through his. Captain Peake's dark eyes blazed out one flash of delight, and then nodding triumphantly to Sir Frederic, contented himself with patting the little hand which lay on his arm.

A shade of disappointment passed over the baronet's face, but he soon banished it, being too philosophic not to bow before the Inevitable. Then, a new light breaking in upon him, as he observed the tender expression of Peake's countenance, the generous side of his character broke out. "My dear Peake!" he exclaimed, "I cannot allow you to bear all the loss!"

"I do not intend to lose anything," replied Captain Peake. "The young lubber shall repay me. I'll put him in the way of doing it, and repayment shall be the salvation of him."

"I hope, now, all misunderstandings are cleared up?" said Samperton.

"Not all," answered Mrs. Chutney. "From the total want of confidence and consideration Colonel Chutney has shown me, I feel that my society no longer gives him pleasure." Here the colonel, not wishing to compromise his wife before strangers, showed her the rim of Deal's hat, which he held partially concealed. But this had no terrors for the speaker, who continued: "I live in terror of his temper, and in unsuccessful endeavours to please him. Mary, I shall leave this house with you."

"Come, Loo!" said the colonel, "these theatrical airs will not impose on me."

"Let me go in peace," returned Mrs. Chutney, so resolutely that all were astonished, and the colonel dropped Deal's hat, and turned pale. "Keep Wilson," continued Mrs. Chutney, in the same tone of settled determination; "she understands a curry, and is tolerably careful. I shall send to-morrow for my large black portmanteau and bonnet-box."

At this crisis, Wilson, the page, and housemaid, who, by some mysterious means, seemed fully aware of every tittle of what was passing, entered tumultuously, the women weeping. "D'ye think, 'm, I'd stay behind with such a raging lion of a master, without you, 'm?" cried Wilson. "No! I hereby give notice I leave this day month."

"And I'd be wore to an atomy in a fortnight if the mistress wasn't here to soften the 'sperities of the place," added the page.

"I leaves with Mrs. Wilson," concluded the housemaid, emphatically.

"Leave? Leave the room this moment!" cried the colonel, broken down by this unanimous testimony against him. "But I say, Loo! this—this is absurd. I—I'm sorry I vexed you. I—oh! don't leave me—I love you—by Jove, I am more in love with you than ever I was."

"What!" asked Mrs. Chutney, "do you openly entreat me to stay, and promise to put up with my short-comings, and try to make the best of me?"

"Yes, stay on any terms; I do ask you. I won't find fault any more; and nothing that happens in this house shall put me in a passion again." Several tender adjurations to his "dear Loo!" followed, and the colonel finished by holding out his arms to her.

"You darling old tiger," said his wife, falling into them. "Have we filed your claws at last?"

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AT THE BAR.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "A CRUISE UPON WHEELS," &c. &c.

CHAPTER IV. THE HERBALIST'S SHOP.

THE shop of Mr. Cornelius Vampi stood in a noisy crowded thoroughfare in the vicinity of Tottenham-court-road. The street in which Mr. Vampi's residence was situated was one of those which are only to be found in poor neighbourhoods, and which are characterised by extreme stagnation during the daytime, and a mighty confusion and stir after nightfall. It was one of those streets in which itinerant vendors of vegetables, fried fish, periwinkles, and other necessaries of the poor man's life, have constituted to themselves the right of establishing their stalls in a long line on the edge of the footway, with a distinct intention of rivalling their competitors in the shops, at whose very doors they have planted their barrows, and underselling them as far as it is possible in so cheap a neighbourhood.

There seem to be, however, customers enough for both. On a Saturday night the shops on either side of the way, and the two lines of stalls facing the shops, have both of them plenty of customers, and appear both to be doing a brisk business, if a cheap. Perhaps the stalls get on the whole the most custom. Their owners make so much noise, are so confident in the goodness of their own wares, are so importunate with the passers-by, have such an insinuating way of thrusting a handful of onions, or a bunch of greens, under the noses of hesitating housewives, that it is almost impossible to resist their wiles, without at least falling a victim to the extent of a few lettuces, or a bundle of turnips. It is a curious bewildering scene, and the flare of the candles, screened with paper, which belong to the itinerants, and of the gas-jets, with no screens at all, which blaze and roar in the open shops, make the place quite as light as it is in the (November) daylight, not to say a good deal lighter. Meantime, the costermongers roar to you as you pass, the butchers in front of their houses solicit your patronage in most emphatic terms, and the ballad-singer, with the group of children and the watchful eye, contributes his dismal notes to swell the general uproar.

It has been said that, in the thoroughfare with which we have to do, the rows of stalls are ranged in front of the shops, and are distinctly intended to compete with them for public favour and patronage, and it is in this point that Mr. Cornelius Vampi has an advantage over his neighbours. There are no costermongers in Mr. Vampi's line, for Mr. Vampi is a herbalist and a seedsman, and a seller of corn-plaisters and of all sorts of drugs, and he has even a plaster-cast of a horse in his window to intimate that medicines adapted to the stomachs of the inferior animals may be obtained at his emporium, while as to the lozenges for coughs and lozenges for dyspepsia, and for any other human or inhuman ailment which can be conceived, they even rival the collection of boxes of ointment which always abound to so alarming an extent in the poorer neighbourhoods of the metropolis.

But it must not be supposed that Mr. Vampi's shop was, in the strict sense of the word, a chemist's shop. There were no red and green and amber-coloured bottles in the window, nor was there any coloured lamp over the door, nor any intimation in words to suggest that the business was a druggist's. "Cornelius Vampi, Herbalist," was all that was inscribed, and that in letters which were obscure from dirt and antiquity. Nor was the inside of the shop more suggestive of pharmacy than the exterior. Where were the rows of brilliant bottles labelled "Sp: Mind:" or "Tinct: Ammon:" or the drawers "Pulv: Col:" and "Carb: Sod:"? Where were the glass-cases full of perfumery, and soaps, and dentifrices, and pastilles? There were none of these. No china jars of leeches, no mahogany *hall chairs*—always for inexplicable reasons—so much affected by chemists, no lemonade bottles, nor gazogene ready to pump out soda-water for the thirsty. Lastly, there was no pale, mild-eyed, gentlemanly creature, dressed in black, and wearing a white apron and spectacles, behind the counter, ready to give you advice gratis, or to pull out your teeth in the back shop.

Mr. Cornelius Vampi's shop was a herbalist's shop, and this you certainly felt very strongly when you got inside it. The herbs stared you in the face in every direction, and look where you would. They hung—these were the commoner kinds—in masses from the ceiling. They reposed on shelves all round the shop in bundles, neatly labelled. You felt that all the little drawers were full of them, indeed most of these drawers were inscribed—and that in plain Eng-

lish—with names that left no doubt: St. John's Wort, Hedge Hyssop, Celadine, Monkshood, Rue, Holy Thistle, and the like. Nor were these the only curiosities in which this strange warehouse abounded. There were bones shadowed forth in obscure corners, bones of the elk, skulls of horses and dogs, a complete skeleton of a cat, and sundry glass jars containing objects impossible to identify preserved in spirits. All seemed jumbled, too, in inextricable confusion, but yet it is a fact that Mr. Cornelius Vampi knew perfectly well where to lay his hand upon anything that he wanted, from the stuffed alligator to the jar of snails to which his celebrated corn-plaister was so largely indebted.

But not more different was Mr. Cornelius Vampi's shop from that of a chemist and druggist than was Mr. Vampi himself, from the smug gentleman who has been described above. He was a tall, powerfully-built man, with a large abdomen, and the jolliest red face that ever was seen. It did you good only to see him smile and to hear the rich loud tones of his jovial voice. This man had been gifted with a perfectly well-ordered nature, and all the wheels of his machinery worked so glibly and so easily, that a degree of serenity was the result which compelled him at times—as he once informed an intimate friend—"to wear a scrubbing-brush next his skin because he was too happy."

And perhaps it would be a difficult thing to find a happier man than our friend the herbalist. Entirely absorbed in a number of occupations, all to him of surpassing interest, distracted by these and by the numerous experiments of a medical sort connected with the herbs in which he dealt, and in whose virtues he was a profound believer, applied to continually by the poor people in this poor neighbourhood for advice in their ailments, for they all believed in him implicitly, and got benefit from the very tone of the man's mind if not from his medicaments, Mr. Cornelius was occupied every moment of his life, and that in a manner entirely congenial to his tastes. Nor was this all. In addition to his medical studies, there was another kind of knowledge in the pursuit of which our friend was even more eager than in hunting out the hidden virtues of his favourite herbs. Cornelius Vampi was an astrologer.

Strange as this announcement may appear, it was nevertheless true that here was a man keeping a shop in a poor street in the metropolis, and in the nineteenth century, who was yet a profound believer in the stars, and in their influence for good or evil on the lives of his fellow-citizens.

He had, at the top of that very house of which the herbalist's shop formed the lower part, a garret which he had converted into a sort of observatory, and from which, on clear nights, he was able to study all the planets, making his combinations and deductions therefrom entirely to his own satisfaction. Here, too, and on his favourite hobby, he had not hesitated to lay out money. He had got a telescope of very fair power mounted on a stand, a celestial globe, and all sorts of expensive instruments, while the walls were decorated with charts showing the situations of the heavenly bodies, besides a row of book-shelves, on which were displayed the works of Copernicus and Newton cheek-by-jowl—for Cornelius combined the sciences of astrology and astronomy—with his favourites Albertus Magnus and Cornelius Agrippa.

All the time that our good friend Vampi could spare from his shop duties below was devoted to the prosecution of his favourite studies in the observatory above. Here he sat late in the night at work, for he could do with little sleep, and his herculean strength seemed to set weariness at defiance. Here he studied the stars in the interests of those persons—a much more numerous class than might have been supposed—who came to consult him as to their future careers. Here, having once got the day and hour of the nativities of his different clients, he was able to ascertain what fortunes and misfortunes were in store for them, when and under what circumstances their matrimonial career was to begin, and how it was likely to prosper, when danger was to be apprehended, and when an avalanche of prosperity and happiness. He would seriously warn one against going near water on a certain day, for instance, and would quote his own example as corroborative of the warning, relating how, on a certain day, when his own horoscope had foretold that he should be in danger by water, he had shut himself up in his room determined not to stir out of it all day; how he had been sent for at a certain hour to the shop to attend to a matter which was beyond the province of his assistant; how he had in his haste kicked over a pail of water which was standing on the stairs, and, being kept some time with no opportunity of changing his wet shoes and stockings, had caught an inflammation of the lungs which had well-nigh finished him. He would tell another, that on the day after to-morrow he must be on his guard against the animal creation, which was dead against him on that day, and would caution his client not so much as to get into an omnibus, or cross over the street, or caress a dog or a cat during the twenty-four hours.

All these predictions and warnings he would back up by quotations from the horoscope of the particular individual with whose destiny he happened to be concerned—quotations couched in terms wholly unintelligible to the many, mystifying statements about "Mercury breaking into the house of Mars," and other jargon of the craft. Nor did it in the least affect the reputation of our sage, or diminish his own confidence in his powers of vaticination, when these prophecies failed utterly to be fulfilled. For was it not always possible to say—yes, and to believe, for Cornelius was an honest man—that adverse influences had been suddenly brought to bear, or that his client had, under his direction, been able so to act as to defeat the malignant intentions of the inimical planets?

Such was the individual whose ruddy countenance showed behind the counter of the herb-

alist's shop which has just been described, on a certain Saturday evening in early December. It was a wet, sloppy evening, when all the lamps in all the shops and at all the stalls, besides the street-lamps themselves, were reflected in the pavement and the puddles, giving a double brilliancy to the scene. Evening, and specially Saturday evening, was a busy time in the herbalist's shop, and both Cornelius himself and his assistant—a youth of eighteen whom our friend would insist on calling "boy"—were kept actively at work till a late hour in the evening. On Saturday evenings such streets as that in which Vampi resided are so full of booths where not only the necessaries, but the luxuries of poor life are retailed, that they look almost as if a fair were being held in them, and the poor are lured on to commit wild excesses in the excitement of the moment, indulging in sheep's trotters for supper, even with the prospect before them of a roast joint from the "bakeus" next day. And on this particular night, too, the poor man has time to think of his ailments. This is the night when the fact that he is "bad in his inside" may be confronted, and it is now that the rheumatic limb may get a chance of being duly embrocated.

Our herbalist's shop was pretty well filled. Here was a gardener wanting to buy seeds, a boy with a swelled face looking rueful. By the counter stood a grave worn-looking woman with an empty bottle in her hand; another, with a sick child in her arms, was exhibiting the little thing's wasted leg to the learned astrologer.

"She don't seem to get a bit stronger," the poor woman said.

"No, poor little morsel," replied our philosopher, sympathetically, "nor ever will, while you bring her out on such a night as this. Why, it's death to her, my good woman. Take her home, take her home, as fast as you can go, and get her warm, and give her a cup of warm broth, if you can manage it. Ah! you can't?"

The poor woman shook her head sorrowfully. "No, Mr. Vampi; not to-night, I'm afraid."

"Ah, then, give her a little gruel; here's a packet of grits; you can pay for it next week, you know. And here, take these herbs"—the astrologer had been making up a collection all this time—"and let them boil gently for a couple of hours in a quart of water, and then pour it off, and give her two table-spoonfuls three times a day, and be sure you keep her in-doors and warm, and don't bring her next time you come. Now, ma'am, what's for you?"

This was addressed to a very little girl, who, speaking in a very loud voice, and producing a very large empty bottle, imperatively demanded:

"Ha'p'orth of klorrid of lime, please; and I've been to Mr. Squills's, and he said he didn't make ha'p'orths, so I thought I'd come here."

"Well, I don't know, I'm sure, but what he was right," replied Cornelius, good humouredly; "a ha'p'orth will be uncommonly little, you know, miss."

The young lady was nothing abashed. "Well, make as large a ha'p'orth as you can," she said, "for mother says the drains is awful, and she feels quite sick."

And having received what she wanted, and paid for it on the spot, the little woman departed in triumph, hugging her bottle.

A young girl, who might have been a milliner's apprentice, or perhaps the daughter of a small tradesman, was waiting her turn. Mr. Vampi was occupied with the gardener for the moment.

"Ah, you'll find those bulbs turn out magnificent, I know. I wish I could find time to go out to your place and see them when they're in flower; yes, and here's the mignonette-seed; and here, boy," he continued, addressing the assistant, "get down some of those Dutch bulbs, and show them to Mr. Green, while I attend to this young lady. Ah, my good girl, I haven't had time yet to finish your horoscope, but I've begun it."

"And how do you think it looks, Mr. Vampi?"

"Well, you know, it seems a pretty good average one. There's a difficult bit or two to get over. Mercury's sadly against you, but I'm just seeing my way to an intervention on the part of Jupiter, who's very friendly, and as long as there's no coalition with Taurus, you may do very well yet; but you mustn't be in a hurry, you know; I always like to do these things thoroughly, and I'm a great deal occupied just now, besides being in difficulties myself with the Ursa Major, who's got a regular spite against me; so you see you must be patient, and you mustn't hurry me."

"And when may I come again, Mr. Vampi?"

"Oh, in about a week, and perhaps then it may be ready; and, in the mean time, I'd caution you against having anything to say to anybody with red or even reddish hair, for Mars is looking uncommonly antagonistic, I can tell you."

The young lady gave a little start at this last suggestion, and went on her way sorrowfully. However, she consoled herself as she crossed the threshold. "James is fair," she said, in a low key, "but his 'air is not red, it's hauburn."

More and more customers came pouring in, and our friend was applied to for advice as to the treatment of "my good man's bad leg," or "Charley's measles," or "Sarah Jane's" rash, or "Betsy Slovinger's" hair that was falling off, and all sorts of other tragedies and dilemmas. Out of all these our learned friend came triumphantly, but it was always when consulted upon matters of a less earthly nature that he seemed the most oracular, and the most in his element. Nothing could exceed the certainty of conviction which characterised his expressions of opinion, or the zest with which he entered into the subject. Nor were his disciples few in number, or always of the weaker sex, though it must be owned that these preponderated, and that such lords of the creation as were desirous of prying into hidden matters were generally afraid of the shop, and apt to seek out secret interviews with the astrologer in his observatory up-stairs.

On that Saturday night with which our narrative is concerned, and while the herbalist was most busy, the figure of a lady might have been seen, if any one had taken the trouble to notice it, gazing in at the shop window in an uneasy and wistful manner, and then looking about her as if undecided how to act. The lady was muffled up closely in a woollen shawl, and her face was covered with a veil, the pattern of which was so thick and spreading that it was impossible to judge of her features with any accuracy. She seemed to want to enter the shop, and yet to hesitate about it, and would sometimes even walk a little way in another direction, and then return. On one of these occasions of her returning to the shop, she seemed at last to have made up her mind, and, not waiting to think any more about it, she turned swiftly in at the door and advanced to where the wise man—in a temporary lull of custom—was standing behind his counter absorbed in thought, and mounted, no doubt, upon his favourite hobby.

The lady made straight up to him, and they were soon engaged in a conversation apparently of some interest, but it was conducted in so low a key, that only a word occasionally pronounced in the louder tones of the stalwart herbalist was at all audible. Ultimately, and after a great many pros and cons, some preparation, on which a great deal of care had been bestowed, was handed over to the lady, who paid for what she had received at once, and left the shop closely veiled, as she had entered it.

CHAPTER V. KEEPING HOUSE.

The scene in the herbalist's shop commemorated in the last chapter is represented as having taken place in the month of December, whilst, on reference to the chapter which preceded it, it will be found that the arrival of Miss Carrington in London occurred in November. There had been time in the interval for all the disagreeable qualities possessed by Miss Carrington and her amiable domestic to become fully developed; nor was it possible, after that first night, that Mrs. Penmore could keep her husband in ignorance of what was going on.

In the first place, it was indispensable that the question of the little study up-stairs, and its abdication by the legitimate owner, should be discussed, and this implied the necessity of touching on Miss Cantanker's peculiar temper, as shown in her announcement that she neither could nor would remain in the apartment which had been originally prepared for her. So, by degrees, it came out that this good-natured person was likely to be then and always a source of great trouble and annoyance in the house. The luckless Gilbert, reckoning without his host, suggested that if Miss Cantanker did not like her quarters, Miss Cantanker might go; but here his wife was in a condition to set him right. "Her mistress," she said, "would as soon think of parting with her right hand, as of dismissing her attendant, who had managed to get an ascendancy over her about which there could be no doubt. The two must go or stay together—there was no doubt about that."

And so it ended in the little study being confiscated, and poor Gilbert had to execute such work as he did at home, either in his small dressing-room which had no fireplace, or in the dining-room, when it was not wanted for other purposes.

Our young people were, unhappily, not successful in providing either mistress or maid with meals which were suited to their respective palates, and it must be freely acknowledged that the unfortunate Charlotte did seem to have been struck with a sort of paralysis ever since the arrival of Miss Carrington and her confidential maid. This last especially appeared to have the power of reducing the poor servant-of-all-work to a state of temporary insanity, by the mere fact of her being at times present in the kitchen. "I'm that flurried, mum," she said to her mistress, when trying on one occasion to excuse one of her worst failures, "I'm that flurried when she comes nigh me, that I don't know a rump-steak from a mutton-chop." The consequence of this state of things was, that certainly some very remarkable specimens of cookery did, from time to time, appear on table at the little house in Beaumont-street. Joints strangely combining a burnt-up outside, revealed at the very first cut a raw inside; potatoes mealy without, but resembling bullets when attacked with the spoon; semolina puddings, whose semolina had coagulated into hard lumps, refusing to have anything to say to the mysterious and whey-like liquid which formed the main body of the pudding. The fact is, that the treatment applied by our artist to the raw material on which her powers were to be displayed, was always of too fierce and rapid a sort. Furious heat was applied, such as no food could stand long and exist. It did not stand it long, and, in consequence, was not done through.

Hence, the flesh of the fried sole was inseparable from the bones, while the cauliflower, beautiful to look at, was found, on inquiring within, to be raw and indigestible.

The wily Cantanker, indeed, was not the woman to allow her digestive faculties to be thus tampered with. She took all her meals in the room which she had succeeded in abstracting from its hapless owner, and as she prepared them with her own hands below, was continually to be met on the stairs carrying up some savoury and succulent morsel, wearing at the same time the expression of countenance of a martyr in some great cause. This remarkable person was also always ready to take in hand the preparation of any article or articles of food of which it was distinctly understood that her mistress alone was to be partaker. She would make Miss Carrington's breakfast in the morning, poaching her eggs, and cooking her toast with the greatest care, and she would also insist on making the broth, a cup of which her mistress always consumed the last thing at night, but with the dinner she would have nothing to do. "Mr. and Mrs. Penmore," she would say,

"partook of that meal, and she was not going to roast herself before the fire for *them*." So the dinners were handed over to be exclusively cared for by Mrs. Penmore's cordon-bleu.

It was the practice of Miss Carrington at times entirely to ignore the deficiencies of the servant-of-all-work, and to act upon a preconceived idea that there was a professed cook in the house. Thus she would send for Gabrielle in the morning, and, saying that she felt rather poorly just then, would ask it as a favour that the dinner might be one tolerably suited to a delicate stomach. "I don't want anything very wonderful," she would say; "a little clear soup, a croquette, and some game, I really feel as if that would do me good, and as if there was nothing else that I could eat." Then would Mrs. Penmore descend into the lower regions, and would herself—for it got to that at last—attempt, with the aid of a cookery-book, and with Charlotte to do the rough work, the compilation of the delicacies demanded by her guest. But the cookery-book bewildered instead of helping her, and left so much unsaid, besides saying so much that was unintelligible, that poor Gabrielle was at times almost inclined, in her desperation, to go off in search of the author, to put a few questions to him or her on matters left unexplained in the text. And then this cookery-book seemed to expect that those who consulted it were to be possessed of such enormous wealth. The author thought nothing of directing you to "take the breasts of five partridges," to form only one ingredient in a dish which would also require "the yolks of twelve plover's eggs, a handful of truffles," and sundry other delicacies equally costly; whilst as to the amount of chicken-broth and of beef-stock which you must have by you before you even attempted a clear soup, that alone implied a princely income. Also, the book expected too much knowledge in the reader, and took it for granted that he was acquainted with things of which, in the present case at any rate, "the reader" was totally ignorant.

The consequence of all this was, that our inexperienced little housewife was fain to make the most hazardous compromises in obeying the instructions put before her. Any particular process which she could not understand she omitted. Any peculiarly extravagant element in the composition with which she was engaged she left out, or administered homœopathically; while those ingredients which were within the reach of her small means would be enforced with such undue emphasis as to interfere sadly with the harmony of the whole. As to appealing to Charlotte for advice in any of these difficulties, that was leaning upon a broken reed with a vengeance.

"Look here, Charlotte," the poor lady would say, helplessly, "they tell us to 'take a table-spoonful of Sauce No. 2, see page 16,' and then a 'tea-spoonful of Sauce No. 8,' see some other page, but what are we to do if we haven't got them?"

"I'm sure I don't know, mum."

"Do you think you could make No. 2 while I prepare the rest? Let us see: 'It is best to prepare this sauce in rather a large quantity, so that you may have it by you. Take a bottle of the best claret wine and pour it over half a dozen trussed ortolans, which you will have ready in the bottom of a saucepan; add the juice of two limes—be particular that they are not large ones—and a handful of pistaccio-nuts tied up in a bag. Then grate a nutmeg over the whole, but in this (as a little more or less than the right amount will spoil the sauce) you must be guided by your own discretion——'"

"Oh, if you please, mum, I'd rather not try that."

"No, I should think not, Charlotte. I'm afraid we must give that up altogether. But the worst of it is, that they all seem one as impossible as another, and *so* expensive. What are we to do?"

"I'm sure I don't know, mum."

"Well, I suppose we must do as well as we can." And then commenced the system of compromises spoken of above.

But the great canons of art are not to be thus lightly trifled with. When the dishes which had been prepared in so unprincipled a manner came to table, they were apt to be entirely wanting in flavour, and to present an ugly and unappetising appearance to the eye. Now, Miss Carrington was not the person to eat what was set before her and make no complaint; far from it. One of two results invariably attended these culinary failures; either Miss Carrington viewed the meal at which she was assisting in a ludicrous point of view, and lashed the different dishes, so to speak, with sarcasms; or she declined to eat at all, and assumed the airs of a martyr who is being gradually starved to death.

"Why, what on earth is this?" she would say, after turning the contents of her plate over for some time with her fork. It was in this case a dish of Gabrielle's own invention, a mince up of veal and ham enclosed in batter, like fritters, and fried. Poor thing, how she had thought over it in the night, and determined to make it a chef-d'œuvre.

"Is it fish?" inquired Miss Carrington, innocently.

Gabrielle mentioned the nature of the composition, and felt wounded to the core.

"I'm sure it's exceedingly nice," remarked Gilbert, who always stood by his dear West Indian.

"Do you know, it really *is* rather nice," observed Miss Carrington, in a patronising tone. And she actually managed to eat a little bit, leaving half a plateful untouched, of course.

Penmore, in a somewhat vindictive spirit, called for the dish again, and helped himself freely.

"I'm afraid you don't like it," said Gabrielle, addressing her guest.

"Oh, on the contrary, I assure you it's quite nice. *You* seem to like it, at any rate, Gilbert," she said, addressing her cousin.

"I do, I can tell you."

"The fact is," continued the lady, "that I'm not very hungry to-day. Not *now*, at any rate."

Such words as these would have the effect of irritating in an excessive degree the temper of the unhappy Gilbert, and it often took him some time to get round sufficiently for purposes of general conversation.

"Why, you are eating nothing," he said, presently.

"I really have no appetite," replied the martyr. "I dare say I shall be hungry by-and-by, and you'll bring me some broth, Jane, won't you?"

This was addressed to Miss Cantanker, whom her mistress, when she wished to be particularly amiable, would address by her christian name.

"Yes, miss," replied the acid one, highly satisfied, "cup of nice 'ot broth."

This good lady always waited upon her mistress at table, but on no one else. In fact, it was her business to ignore Mr. and Mrs. Penmore altogether, and to act as if she was not aware of their existence. And, as far as Gabrielle was concerned, Miss Carrington followed on the same side, always addressing herself to Gilbert in conversation, and especially when there was anything that she wanted done. The young lawyer was, however, too much for her in this way, invariably referring the matter, whatever it might be, back to his wife, and so making it compulsory on Miss Carrington to recognise the presence of her hostess, whether she liked it or not.

"Oh, Gilbert," she said, on one occasion, "I've got such a hard pillow up-stairs. Wouldn't it be possible to let me have a softer one?"

"My dear Diana"—this, by-the-by, was Miss Carrington's euphonious christian name—"my dear Diana, I must remind you that Gabrielle is the proper person to apply to about such matters."

But it would be an uncongenial task to me to record at length all the humiliating and painful things which our poor Gabrielle had to put up with at the hands of her tormentor. And yet it would be difficult to say whether Mrs. Penmore felt them more keenly than her husband. It was he, certainly, who resented them the most, and who retaliated the most severely in words. Gabrielle had her husband to think of, and that helped her to bear it, and only once or twice was she betrayed into an angry word or two under excessive pressure. She had to ask Miss Carrington, for instance, on one occasion, to speak to her when she had any complaints to make about household matters, and not to apply to Gilbert, who had troubles enough already of his own. Then Miss Carrington, who shared her domestic's hatred for the wretched maid-of-all-work, would pounce out upon the unhappy Charlotte on the staircase, and tell her not to make so much noise in the room overhead, as really her nerves could not stand it. Or she would send down hostile messages to this functionary through Miss Cantanker, and Mrs. Penmore would find the girl in floods of tears, with her head buried in her arms, and these supported on the kitchen table. This, of course, had to be spoken about, and "miching mallicho" was naturally the result. Miss Carrington would complain, too, from time to time, of the want of servants in the house. She had had no idea that they only kept one domestic, and it was extremely inconvenient, because, in consequence of this deficiency of attendants, so much additional trouble fell to the lot of her faithful Cantanker. The faithful Cantanker was always present on these occasions, and ever ready to put her oar in, on her mistress's side, till called to order by the lady herself, when she was fain to fall back upon malignant glaring. Indeed, in this she excelled to an uncommon extent. Her eyes were never off Mrs. Penmore when they were in the same room, and she seemed to listen with a fixed and venomous intensity to every word that the poor lady uttered. Nor was it only when palpably present that this amiable woman listened. She was continually being discovered outside doors and in passages where she had no business; but she wore ever on these occasions such a look of indignant virtue, and presented at such times—as always—so injured an appearance, that it was quite impossible that any suspicion could attach to her.

So the days passed, and every day that dawned brought with it its full measure of trouble. Meanwhile, our young couple consoled themselves and each other with their great mutual love, and were not all unhappy.

CHAPTER VI. MASTER AND MAN.

Gilbert Penmore had a friend, to whom he really did not hesitate to apply that much-abused title, in the person of Julius Lethwaite, of the Inner Temple, barrister-at-law, not practising. Penmore had become acquainted with him when they were both eating their terms together, and they had gradually got to be, first, acquaintances, and ultimately, even friends. Lethwaite had a great belief in Gilbert, and was firmly convinced that one of these days he would certainly distinguish himself and rise to eminence. For himself he did not care. He was only nominally a barrister, and had never intended to practise, having, indeed, a share in a certain business which was carried on, as he would say, "somewhere in the City," and in the conduct of which he never interfered. He had a confidential clerk who watched his interests in connexion with that same business, and who demanded occasional interviews with his patron, in the course of which he would put a great many very difficult questions to Mr. Julius, as the old man called him, and finding his superior quite unable to answer them, would be under the necessity of providing the replies himself, which he invariably did.

It was one of Mr. Lethwaite's most remark-

able characteristics that he always impugned, or pretended to impugn, human motive. He said that he did not believe in an action done with a good motive, and he would sometimes puzzle himself by the hour together, and bewilder all his faculties, in his endeavours to find out what —whether in his own case or that of others— could have been the real actuating cause of some act which wore a fair outside, but which he pretended must really have been performed with a selfish intention. It was a sort of monomania this with him, and how it originated no one could tell, though there were those who could not help believing that a feeling so little in accordance with Lethwaite's real good nature must have been generated by some act of treachery of which he had once been the victim.

This man's nature was an uncommon one. His unbelief as to the purity of the motives which actuated the conduct of his fellow-men had not by any means the effect of making him either gloomy or morose; on the contrary. He seemed to have made up his mind to the thing. It was in his opinion one of the conditions of our existence—this defectiveness of motive—and we must just put up with it. Sometimes, too, he would puzzle himself by the hour together in trying to find out what could be at the bottom of some act of courtesy of which he had been the object. "That fellow was most extraordinarily civil to me to-day," he would say to himself, reflecting on the behaviour of a certain grumpy servant who held office in his Inn of Court—"most remarkably so. I wonder, now, what he could have been driving at? There must have been some reason for it, for, ordinarily, he's a beast. I wonder what he's after?" And so he would go on twisting and turning the subject over in his mind, till at last a solution would suddenly flash upon him. "Ay, ay, ay," he would then exclaim, with some of the joy which a hunter feels when he has succeeded in tracking his game—"I see it all. We are in the month of December, and it's getting near Christmas." Such a solution of the difficulty as this—probably in this case the right one—would afford the keenest satisfaction to our friend, confirming him in his theory more fixedly than ever.

As to his own bad intentions, Mr. Lethwaite had no sort of doubt about them. If he was sometimes put to it to discover those of others, being impeded by their unwillingness to come forward openly and acknowledge them, he had no such difficulty in his own case. Here, at any rate, was his own heart open to him. He could gaze down into it with piercing eyes, and hunt among all its darkest corners for the vile traitor who sought to avoid him. There should be no deception here, he thought, at any rate. Alas! there was more deception here, perhaps, than anywhere else. Here, perhaps, were his suspicions applied the most cruelly of all. For it was a good heart that he injured when he ransacked its every corner in his determination to find out that it meant badly, and he often deceived himself, in a manner to which most of us are little prone, in arriving at conclusions infinitely derogatory to his own better nature—conclusions which made him out a perfect villain in his own eyes.

Nor did even this habit of self-suspicion tend altogether to sour or embitter the disposition of this singular individual. He had made up his mind that he was incapable of doing anything except, at best, from a mixed motive, and he must just bear it. If he had had an ugly nose, he would say to himself, or if he had been marked with the small-pox, he would not have ignored the truth, or smashed the looking-glass that told him of the fact; and so it should be with the defects of his character. At least he would face them. And he did face them, and, in doing so, in hunting out these half-chimerical deformities and disfigurements, he lost sight entirely of a hundred rare and unselfish qualities which any unprejudiced person would have been able to point out to him.

On the morning with which we are now concerned, Mr. Julius Lethwaite sat in his chambers reading the newspaper after breakfast, and expecting a visit from his confidential clerk. Mr. Lethwaite was a good-looking, though not what is called a handsome man. He was rather tall, and rather thin, he had no colour, and though his features were irregular, his was yet a perfectly successful appearance; more so than that of many a man who is called—and on examination really is—handsome. He was not liable to disastrous chances as regarded his personal appearance—and by this it is meant that he did not freckle, that he never had a red nose, that he did not splutter forth into fits of laughter, though he had a sufficiently keen sense of humour, as was evidenced by the lines of his mouth, and a little wrinkle near one corner of that feature which was permanent, and very full of expression. He was older than his friend Gilbert by many years, and had reached years of discretion; by which I mean that he was now thirty-five.

The room in which our cynic was seated was an essentially comfortable one. There were hardly any chairs but easy ones. There were striped Arab curtains to the windows. There were plenty of books on the book-shelves, periodicals and newspapers everywhere, a blazing fire, and the remains of a very satisfactory breakfast on the table. In one corner of the room, close to a window, was a small table on which were all the materials used in the trade of watch-making, for it was one of our friend's peculiarities that he had a great fancy for that occupation. Indeed, he had been engaged off and on in the construction of a watch for about eight years, and had made nothing of it yet.

Mr. Lethwaite was sitting in a large leather chair turned round towards the fire, and was taking occasional doses of the newspaper, resting between whiles to reflect; an occupation which I can strongly recommend to those who have got nothing to do.

"I cannot think," he said to himself, in the course of one of these pauses, "I cannot think

what can make this man," and he mentioned the name of a well-known philanthropist, "give up his time to such infinitely disagreeable pursuits as poking about in poor neighbourhoods, inhaling nasty smells, encountering nasty sights, talking to people an inch thick in dirt, and full of disease into the bargain, so that he runs the risk of infection continually, when he really is not obliged to do any of these things. It is very extraordinary—*most* extraordinary," he continued, musingly. "I'll tell you what," he went on, sitting up suddenly in his chair, "it must be that he likes it. There's no other way of accounting for it. He likes bad smells and horrible sights—that's it. I knew a man once who liked having his teeth out. Just as I like watch-making—and then these people flatter him, and——"

Here he was interrupted in his reflections by a lively tap at the door, and on his calling to the tapper to come in, a little man, about sixty years of age, with twinkling spectacles, came briskly into the room, smiling and bowing, and pulling off his brown gloves as he advanced towards the fireplace.

"Good morning, sir, good morning," said the little man, as Lethwaite rose and shook him by the hand. "Studying our commercial interests in the newspapers, I see. Can't do better, sir. Can't do better."

He was a small, neat, highly-finished old man this, with eyes that were very bright, and beamed kindly over his glasses, while his mouth, which, when he was not speaking, was tightly closed, was ornamented with a continual placid smile. He was buttoned up tightly in a small great-coat, if the expression may be permitted, and had left a pair of goloshes on the mat outside, so that his shoes were as clean as if he had just come out of his bedroom, though it was a muddy day outside notwithstanding. His name was comfortable, like his appearance. It was Goodrich—Jonathan Goodrich.

"Nothing of the sort, Goodrich, nothing of the sort," replied his patron, in allusion to the strong commercial feeling which the man of business had given him credit for. "On the contrary, I was reading just what came uppermost, and especially all the most frivolous matter that I could by any possibility pick out. Why don't you sit down?"

"Ah! never tell me," returned the little man, obeying his employer's suggestion. "Never tell me. You wouldn't be able to give such important hints as you do in connexion with the business, if you didn't give your attention to commerce, ay, and that pretty closely too, sir. But oh, sir! how I do wish that you'd come down now and then to the office, and superintend things a bit yourself. There's many a question turns up there in the course of the day which I ain't competent to give an opinion on, and then Mr. Gamlin he acts in it on his own responsibility, and it isn't right, sir. It isn't, indeed, for you're the principal, as you know; it's 'Lethwaite and Gamlin,' and not 'Gamlin and Lethwaite——'"

"But, my dear Goodrich," urged the sleeping partner, "you know it's to Mr. Gamlin's interest to engage only in what's profitable to the firm, just as much as it's mine."

"Ah, sir, that's all very well, but you ought to be on the spot, sir, indeed you ought. For there isn't always time, when a question has to be answered, for me to come up here and put it before you; and then, as I said, Mr. Gamlin has to act simply on his own responsibility—and he's too fond of speculating, sir, that's what I say, and too fond of American securities, and it's a country, is America, where you may have a crash at any time, and then where are you? That's what I say, sir."

"And you speak with considerable prudence, no doubt, my good Jonathan, though with too much mistrust of your namesakes over the water. But you may depend upon it that Mr. Gamlin knows well enough what he's about."

"Well, then, Mr. Julius," the old clerk went on, "he's been and bought up ever so much American cotton, and it's left there in warehouse, and it's dangerous, sir, you may depend upon it, with things looking so queer over there. And now he's proposing to buy I don't know how many bales more, and I thought that transactions on such a scale ought not to go on, and you, the head partner, knowing nothing about it. So I thought I'd just step round and speak to you on the subject, and warn you of what's going on, sir, and that we are involved much too deeply in these American undertakings."

"Well, Goodrich, I am disposed to think you're right in that idea, and I authorise you, if there is still time, to enter my protest against any further transactions with the Yankees just at present."

"There, now!" cried the old man, triumphantly, "there's an opinion worth having. Nobody like the head of the firm for right thinking and right acting. That's what I say."

"Don't give *me* credit for it, you old goose," replied the patron, good humouredly; "you know that it was your own idea, and that you are praising yourself all this time."

"Nothing of the sort, sir—nothing of the sort. You come in and knock the nail on the head directly you take the hammer in hand. Ah, sir, if you would but make the Lethwaite, in 'Lethwaite and Gamlin,' the working partner instead of the sleeping partner, we might do then."

"Nonsense, Goodrich, nonsense; we do very well as it is. I should spoil everything; and do remember, once for all, my good friend, that it's Mr. Gamlin's interest as much as mine that we should prosper; and there's nothing like self-interest."

"I don't know that, sir," replied Jonathan, doggedly.

"You do, you aggravating old rascal; you know that everything's done in this world with a selfish motive."

"I don't know anything of the kind, sir."

"Yes you do."

"No I don't. And I'll tell you what, sir,

as I've often told you before, that the sooner you get these notions out of your head the better, for they're misleading you, sir, if you'd allow me the liberty of saying so. Why, do you mean to tell me, Mr. Julius, that when I had that long illness, and Mr. Gamlin thought it was useless keeping me on, as I couldn't attend to my duties, and you came forward and insisted that I should be left in my post,—do you mean to tell me that that was done with a selfish motive?"

"Yes I do. You're obstinate, and unmanageable, and pig-headed; but, in spite of all that, you are useful to me, and you understand me, and you may depend upon it that that was at the bottom of any effort I may have made to keep you in your place."

"Ah, sir, it's no use talking to you, as I well know," replied the old boy, in a despairing tone; "and I suppose it was with the same selfish motive that you came to look after me so often?"

"Why, of course it was."

"And that you brought all sorts of good things, like fowls and jellies?"

"The same motive, beyond a doubt."

"And sherry wine?"

"Always the same, Jonathan, always the same. I wanted you, and was anxious to see you back at your desk, so of course I did what I could to get your strength up."

"There, there, sir, I've done. And now, with your leave, I'll take my departure."

"Not till you've had a glass of that same 'sherry wine,' Jonathan, which did you so much good before."

"Not a drop, sir, not a drop. At this time of day! why, I should be good for nothing all the afternoon. No, sir, I'll just go back to the office as fast as I can, and express the views with which you've kindly favoured me. So good morning, Mr. Julius, good morning. And may you think better of it, sir, and come down and pay us a visit in the City before many days are over." And the old clerk trotted away through the great bustling town, with a countenance in which were depicted great cunning and importance. For was he not the deputed agent of the head partner in Lethwaite and Gamlin's? Did he not actually represent the principal in the firm? And was he not now conveying a message from no less a person than Mr. Julius Lethwaite to no less a person than Mr. Morley Gamlin?

So the old boy might well wear an appearance of astuteness and mystery, as indeed he did, looking on the passers-by with a feeling almost of commiseration for their lot in not being engaged like himself in matters of so much moment.

Meanwhile, his employer had sunk back once more in his great leathern chair, and had fallen into one of his accustomed reveries. "I wonder," he said to himself, "what can make that old fellow so much in earnest about my affairs? Is it gratitude for what he was talking of just now—gratitude for the sherry and the calf's-foot jelly—a real interest in my welfare? Ah, I wish I could think so, but I'm afraid it won't do. His own interest is bound up with mine; if I prosper, he prospers; if I go down, he goes down. It's no use trying to ignore it, that diabolical self-interest shows itself everywhere, and ruins everything." He sat a little while longer occupied with similar reflections, and then he started up suddenly and prepared to go out.

"I'll go and pay Cornelius Vampi a visit," he said, as he put on his hat, "and get some philosophy out of him."

For it must be known that Mr. Lethwaite and Cornelius Vampi were great allies.

GRANDFATHERS AND GRANDMOTHERS.

To my thinking, the most interesting periods of human life are the two extremes—infancy and old age. There is nothing on earth so pure, so beautiful, so innocent, so kissable, as a bright-eyed, laughing, dimpled baby; nothing except a very old man, sans eyes, sans taste, sans teeth, sans everything but a good conscience and a sound heart.

I often wish that Shakespeare had not put that speech-picture of life into the mouth of Jacques. Jacques was a melancholy man, and took a melancholy view of things. If he had not been a misanthrope, a baby might have presented itself to his mind as chuckling and crowing in his nurse's arms, and not as puling and puking. In like manner, he might have drawn a pleasant picture of a green and happy old age, instead of insisting so much upon leanness and slippers and shrunken shanks. The seven ages, as Jacques depicts them, may be in accordance with a certain rule of life; but, for my part, I have met with many beautiful exceptions, and I love to dwell upon them. It has been my good fortune to know many old men, who, after the toil and strife of life, retained all the original innocence and simplicity of their earliest childhood. I have seen them—and I can see them now—sitting in their easy-chairs, their gums as innocent of teeth, and their heads as innocent of hair, as when they lay in their mothers' laps—sitting there biding the Lord's good time patiently and cheerfully, while sons and daughters and grandsons and granddaughters hovered about them, and patted them and smoothed their pillows, and spoke to them in those simple words which seem as well adapted to the old man as to the child. There is a purifying influence in old age which we all recognise. We may know that the old man has led a wicked life; but when old age comes upon him, wrinkling his brow, blanching his hair, and bowing him to the earth, it seems as if he had been redeemed and purified by Time. I can understand why the patriarchs prayed so frequently and so earnestly for length of days; prayed for life until the passions and the vanities of human nature should have passed over like a cloud, leaving the heart to beat its last throb on

the peaceful shore of eternity. It always seems to me that at fourscore a man is neither in this world nor in the next, but that he is in a position between the two, and can look calmly upon both.

I wonder if I am right in my impression that very old men are mostly cheerful. I hope I am; for I love to think so. It is pleasant to believe that human nature can work out its own purification on earth and return to its original innocence, with only such sins on its head as it cannot help and is not responsible for. Right or wrong it is certain that this is the impression which most of us have of persons in extreme old age. We fondle them as we fondle children, we talk to them as we lead them about by the hand, as their parents talked to them when they were first learning to walk. They need help and care now just as they needed them then. There is grandfather sitting in his chair by the fire, seeing things dimly, hearing things vaguely, as he saw and heard from his mother's knee. And we sit by and talk of him as if he did not hear us and understand what we say. "Poor old grandfather," we say, looking towards him; "he is failing very much. He can't see to read now even with his specs, and that is a great deprivation to him. But he is cheerful for all that. Ain't you, grandfather dear?"

And the dear old baby knows by the sound of your voice and the look that you direct towards him that you are addressing him; and he endeavours to guess your meaning, and says something in reply, accompanying it with a pleasant chuckle, to signify that he is quite happy.

He drops his handkerchief or his spectacles, just as a baby drops its spoon or its ivory ring, and you go and pick them up and put them back into his old hand, patting him on his bald head, and making him comfortable in his chair. As he sits there mumbling, and gazing with his viewless eyes into the fire, you wonder if that feeble old man could ever have been the restless, fidgety, madcap schoolboy, the ardent lover sighing like furnace, the fierce soldier, bearded like the pard, full of strange oaths, seeking the bubble reputation at the cannon's mouth? Where be his pranks now, where his sighs, his big loud voice? All these things have passed away like a dream, and in old age he awakes again to infancy.

I think it must be pleasant to sit upon the last shore thus and wait for the boat, not impatient for, neither dreading its coming, pleasant to hear the plash of the oars and the distant song of the rowers as they come to bear you away to that golden land where youth is eternal. I should find it difficult to talk of old grandfathers otherwise than in this strain, for I have never known an old grandfather who, whatever his previous life, did not wear an aspect of innocence. Age is not altogether unkind. While it withers the beauty it also expunges the traces of the evil passions. The film that comes over the eye is a veil to hide the glare of anger; the wrinkles that score the brow are strokes of Time's pen designed to obliterate the frown and the scowl that Passion has written there so boldly. I can recal many grandfathers who were a practical testimony to the soundness of the theory which I have just broached with regard to the purifying influence of age. I remember one, a little feeble, cheery, merry-hearted old fellow, who had been a terrible Turk in his young days. He had been passionate, imperious, violent, a constant source of trouble to his wife, and a terror to his children. When he became an old grandfather he was transformed into the most docile creature imaginable. His own little grandchildren could rule him and make him do just as they liked.

"Do you remember, grandfather," one of them would say, "when you used to give it to your boys all round with the horsewhip?"

"No, no, my dear," he would answer, "I hope I never did that."

"Oh, but you did, grandfather, and grandmother says you used to get drunk and break the chimney ornaments."

"Oh, fie, fie, no, my dear," says the old man, "it couldn't have been me, it must have been somebody else."

And granny strikes in and affirms that he did the deed, completely smashing two china shepherdesses that had been in the family for a century. Which relation sends the old man into a fit of laughter so hearty and good humoured that you cannot conceive he could ever have been capable of the violent conduct imputed to him. I dare say he can scarcely believe it himself now, when age has cast the devil out of him.

I remember another grandfather whose ninety-second birthday was celebrated not many years ago in the house of his granddaughter. He was a picture of aged innocence, gentle, patient, affectionate, and docile as a child. But he had been, as he himself confessed with a sigh, a "roarer" in his day—a sad dog among the women, sir, a six-bottle man, a beater of the watch, a night-brawler, a swaggerer, ever ready to eat fire and resent the slightest insult with lead or steel.

And there he was, on his ninety-second birthday, propped up at table, with a napkin tied round his neck. The swaggerer, who was so ready with sword and pistol, cannot now be trusted with a knife and fork. His food has been cut up for him, and he is eating it with a spoon. The six-bottle man is meekly drinking toast-and-water, weakly flavoured with brandy, from a mug. He cannot grasp a tumbler now, and finds it convenient to have a drinking vessel with a handle. He who had been a sad dog among the women, sir, and ruined so many reputations, grows faint before the feast is over, and feebly calls to his granddaughter to come and support him. And there he lies, like a weak child, nestling his palsied head on her bosom—the gay Lothario!

I sometimes wonder what is meant by the commandment which says, "Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee." Does it mean that they who honour father and

mother will live long? Can it be that those otherwise wicked persons, who live to be happy old grandfathers, attain length of days because, in their youth, they honoured their fathers and mothers? It is pleasant to think so, pleasant to see how bread thus early cast upon the waters comes back, after many days, to the generous hand which originally bestowed it. How seldom do we meet on the highway of life with a grey-headed grandfather trudging the last miles of the journey, friendless and alone. Nearly always he has children or grandchildren by his side to ease his burden, and take him by the hand, and help him up when he faints by the way.

With regard to grandmothers! Is it not a fact that we are accustomed to associate a certain idea of worldliness and selfishness—of wickedness, in fact—with grandmothers, which does not arise in our minds when we picture to ourselves an aged grandfather? We are indebted, in a great measure, to the novel writers for this impression; but we have no reason to question the faithfulness of the picture. We rarely have the idea of a wicked old grandfather, but we often, I am afraid, have the idea of a wicked old grandmother. There is the popular ideal of the wicked old woman in a wig, walking with a crutch-stick, match-making for worldly goods, scheming, lying, telling improper stories, gambling at cards, and cheating sometimes. Is it a true picture, a faithful likeness? I am afraid sometimes it is. There are good grandmothers, of course; but there are bad ones, and they are more often bad than the grandfathers. But we must make reasonable allowance for them. A man in his young and middle-age days can have his fling, his fill of pleasure. He can sow his wild oats to the last grain. The wide scope of his indulgence enables him to see the folly of things. Not so with a woman. Her young days are a period of restraint; her married life is one of subjection. If she be wickedly inclined, it is not until she becomes an old grandmother that she can have her fling. The old grandfather has done with the froward ways of the world, the old grandmother begins to take them in hand.

There are certain outward attributes of the grandmother which accord with this view of her character. While the old grandfather humbly bows his bald head or blanched hair to the stroke of Time, the old grandmother endeavours to bear up against him with a wig or a false front. She is a skittish creature sometimes, and will go out into the field when the harvest is fully ripe, and coquette with the old gentleman who wields the scythe. She beguiles him to drop his gleaming blade and sit down beside her, and she is quite free with him, and taps him over his old knuckles with her fan. This grandmother tricks herself into the belief that the old man will continue polite, and will not suddenly rise up, take his weapon in hand, and cut her down with the rest. And so she goes on pursuing worldly traffic to the very last. This, of course, is only true of some old women; but it is true of them all, that they are more troubled about the world's affairs than men; that when they are disposed to any vice, they follow it with a stronger passion; that when they are the victims of any weakness, they are more completely under its influence. Avarice has been called a good old gentlemanly vice. It is rather, I think, a good old gentlewomanly vice. There is an extreme period of age when a man drops the money-bags; but a woman clings to them to the last, and will die with her fingers clutching them. Not that she is naturally more avaricious than man, but her life of dependence has filled her with an inordinate dread of poverty. She is afraid of being alone and friendless, *without money*. The old man has not this dread. At a certain stage he cares little what becomes of him. He will go to the workhouse cheerfully, while the woman will, of all last resources, avoid that.

The drop of dew which glistens under the sunlight like a diamond, reveals under the microscope a mass of writhing, wriggling worms, fearsome to look at. Let us then stand a little back from our grandfathers and grandmothers. Let us shut up the microscope and view them under the sun. Going down the hill together hand in hand, they are a spectacle to fill the heart with gratitude to Heaven that such a peaceful fate is man's on earth. What a privilege for a grown man to have an aged grandfather and grandmother!—to be their stay and support in their old days, to stand by at last and close their eyes. What happiness to the aged to be thus lovingly tended, and have their own old care repaid to them. Truly, length of days are a blessed portion to old people, who live to see their children and their children's children spring up around them with a constant increase of affection—giving assurance that man can never die, and love can never fade.

HALF A MILLION OF MONEY.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "BARBARA'S HISTORY."

CHAPTER LIV. HOW THE EARL SPED IN HIS WOOING.

It was a hurried, uncomfortable afternoon at Castletowers, and Signor Colonna's visitor had brought nothing but confusion to the house. The news was really important news to those whom it concerned; but there was nothing which Lady Castletowers disliked so much as excitement, nothing in her eyes so undignified as haste, and she was therefore not a little displeased by this sudden breaking up of her party. It was nothing to her that Garibaldi was in occupation of Palermo. It was nothing to her that an armistice had been concluded with the Neapolitan government, or that the army would be likely to march next in the direction of Messina. She only knew that the Walkingshaws and Miss Hatherton were coming to dine with her that very day; that Signor Montecuculi would make one too many at the

table; and that the departure of the Colonnas immediately after dinner would spoil the evening.

In the mean while Signor Colonna was deep in consultation with the new comer; Olimpia, assisted by one of the maids, was busy packing her father's books and papers; the Earl was wandering disconsolately to and fro, seeking his opportunity; and Saxon Trefalden, mounted on his swiftest thorough-bred, was galloping towards the hills, determined to leave a clear field for his friend, and not to come back till the first dinner-bell should be ringing.

At length, as the afternoon wore on, the Earl grew tired of waiting about the drawing-rooms and staircase, and sought Olimpia in her father's quarters. There he found her, not in Colonna's own den, but in the room immediately beneath it, kneeling before a huge army trunk more than half filled with pamphlets, letters, despatches, maps, and documentary lumber of every description. More books and papers littered the floor and table, and these the servant was dusting previous to their being sorted and tied up by Miss Colonna.

"Can I be of any service?" asked the Earl, as he peeped in through the half-opened door.

Olimpia looked up with a pleasant smile.

"Are you really in want of something to do?" said she.

"Greatly."

"Then you may help to sort these papers. Among them are some dozens of last year's reports. You can arrange those according to date, and tie them up in parcels of about eighteen or twenty."

The Earl set about his task with much seeming alacrity.

"We owe Montecuculi a grudge for this," he said, presently. "Who would have thought this morning at breakfast that you would strike your tents and flee away into the great London desert before night?"

"Who would have thought that we should have such glorious cause for breaking up our camp?" retorted Olimpia, with enthusiasm.

"No one, indeed. And yet I wish the news had not travelled quite so quickly."

"Good news cannot fly too fast," replied Olimpia. "I scarcely dare trust myself to think what the next may be."

"At least, do not hope too much."

"Nay, I have desponded long enough. Hope has been for so many years a forbidden luxury, that I feel as if I could not now drink of it too deeply. I hope all things. I expect all things. I believe that the hour is come at last, and that miracles will be accomplished within the next few months."

The Earl, thinking more of his own hopes and fears at that moment than of Italy or the Italians, wished with all his heart that a miracle could be accomplished then and there for the translation of the housemaid to any convenient planet.

"I should not be surprised," continued Olimpia, "if I heard to-morrow that Garibaldi was in Messina—or that he had crossed the straits, and carried Naples by a coup de main!"

"Nor I," replied Castletowers, abstractedly.

And then for a few moments they were both silent. In the midst of their silence, a bell rang long and loudly in some part of the offices below.

"What bell is that?" asked the Earl, who had heard it thousands of times in the course of his home-life, and knew its import perfectly.

"It's the servants' hall bell, my lord," replied the housemaid.

"And what does it mean, then—the servants' tea?"

"Yes, my lord."

Olimpia took the Earl's little bait immediately.

"You need not mind the rest of those papers now, Jane," she said, good naturedly. "Go down at once, and come back when you have had tea."

Whereupon the housemaid, duly grateful, left the room.

And now Lord Castletowers had only to speak. The coveted opportunity was his at last; but it was no sooner his than he lost his presence of mind, and found himself without a word to say.

Presently Olimpia looked up, and spoke again.

"How hard a thing it is," said she, "to be a woman—a mere woman! How hard to sit down tamely, day after day, listening to the echoes of the battle-field—listening and waiting!"

"I am very glad you are listening from so safe a distance."

"And I pray that that distance may soon be lessened," she retorted, quickly. "We shall undoubtedly go to Genoa in the course of the next fortnight; and if my father crosses to Sicily, I do not mean to be left behind."

"But the Mediterranean swarms with Neapolitan war-steamers!" exclaimed the Earl.

Olimpia smiled.

"Besides, of what service could you be when there? You will perhaps say that you can do hospital work; but the hospitals do not want you. Ten per cent of our volunteers are medical men, and I will venture to say that every woman in Sicily is a willing nurse."

"I would do any work that my head or hands could be trusted to perform," said she; "whether it were at the desk, or the bedside. Oh, that I could give my blood for the cause!"

"Men give their blood," replied the Earl; "but women the tears that make death sweet, and the smiles that make victory worth achieving."

Olimpia's lip curled scornfully.

"Our soldiers have nobler ends at stake than women's smiles!" said she.

The Earl was in despair. Nothing that he had said seemed to find favour with Miss Colonna, and all this time the minutes were slipping away—the precious minutes for which there would be no recal.

"True friend to the cause as I am, Olimpia,"

said he, desperately, "if I were to go out, it would be as much for your sake as for the sake of your country; but I hope you would not scorn my sword for that reason."

Miss Colonna was taken by surprise. She had never been blind to the young man's admiration; but, having tacitly discouraged it for so long, she had taken it for granted that he would not venture on a declaration. Even now, though he had spoken words which could bear no other interpretation, she determined to put the thing aside, and prevent him, if possible, from speaking more plainly. And yet her heart stirred strangely when he called her by her name!

"Yours is almost the only sword we should decline to enlist on any terms, Lord Castletowers," she replied, gravely. "You are an only son, and the last inheritor of a noble name. Your duties lie here."

"You would not think thus if I were an Italian?"

"Certainly not. I should then say that your first duty was to your country."

The Earl came and stood before her, pale and earnest, and not to be turned from his purpose.

"Hear me, Olimpia," he said, passionately. "I love you, and you know that I love you. I have loved you for more than four years. I will not say that I have dared to hope. If I had hoped, I should not, perhaps, have kept silence so long; but I may have thought that you read my secret, and that silence might plead for me more eloquently than words. I know how heavy the chances are against me—I have weighed them all, long since. I know that he who would aspire to your hand must love your Italy as if he were a son of the soil, must throw in his fortunes with her fortunes, and deserve you through his devotion to her cause. I also know that the man who had done all this would only have fulfilled those primary conditions without which the humblest red-shirt in Garibaldi's wake would stand a better chance than himself. Am I not right?"

"Perfectly; but——"

"Do not reply yet, I implore you! You say that I have duties here. It is true; and I am prepared to fulfil them to the utmost. I will settle this house and half my income on my mother for her life. All else that is mine, land, revenue, strength of body and will, personal influence, life itself, shall be Italy's. Your country shall be my country—your people, my people—your God, my God. Can I say more, except that I love you? That, deeply and dearly as I love you now, I believe from my soul I shall love you better still in years to come. In my eyes you will never be less young or less beautiful. Should sorrow or sickness come upon you, I will do all that man may do to cherish and comfort you. If you are in peril, I will die defending you. The love of my youth will be the love of my age; and what you are to me now, Olimpia, whether you reject or accept me, that you will be till my last hour!"

He paused. His manner, even more than his words, had been intense and eager, and now that his passionate appeal was all poured out, he waited for his sentence.

And Olimpia? Did she listen unmoved? She strove hard to do so; but she could not quite control the colour that came and went, or the tears that would not be stayed. One by one, as his pleading grew more earnest, they had slipped slowly over the dark lashes and down the oval cheek; and the Earl, who had never seen her shed a tear before, believed for one wild moment that his cause was won.

Her first words undeceived him.

"I am very sorry for this, Lord Castletowers," she said; and her voice, which was a little tremulous at first, became steady as she went on. "I would have given much that these words had never been spoken; for they are spoken in vain. I believe that you love me sincerely. I believe that I have never been so well loved—that I shall never be so well loved again; but—I cannot marry you."

"You will, at least, give me a reason!"

"To what end? That you might combat it? Do not ask it, my lord. Nothing that I could tell, nothing that you could say, would alter my decision."

The Earl turned his face aside.

"This is cruel," he said. "I have not deserved it."

"Heaven knows that I do not mean it so," replied Olimpia, quickly. "I should be more or less than woman if I did not regret the loss of such a heart as yours."

"You have not lost it, Olimpia," he replied, brokenly. "You will never lose it. With me, once is always."

She clasped her hands together, like one in pain.

"Oh, that it were not so!" she exclaimed.

"Are you, then, sorry for me?"

"Bitterly—bitterly!"

"And yet you cannot love me?"

Olimpia was silent.

Again the hope flashed upon him—again he broke into passionate pleading.

"I used to think once—madly, presumptuously, if you will—that you were not quite so indifferent to me as you have been of late. Was I mistaken in so thinking? Or is it possible that I have done anything to lessen your regard? Have I ever offended you? Or pained you? Or manifested my admiration too openly?"

"Never—never."

"Then, did you never care for me? For Heaven's sake, tell me this before we part."

Olimpia became ashy pale and leaned upon the table, as if her strength were failing her.

"Lord Castletowers," she said, slowly, "you have no right to press me thus."

"Not when the happiness of my whole life is at stake? Give me but the shadow of a hope, and I will be silent!"

"I cannot."

The Earl put his hand to his forehead in a bewildered way.

"I don't seem as if I could believe it," he

said. "But—if I only knew why, perhaps it would not be so hard to bear."

Miss Colonna looked down, and for some moments neither spoke nor stirred. At length she said:

"I will tell you why, Lord Castletowers, if you *must* know. It is possible that I may never marry; but if I do, it must be to one who can do more for Italy than yourself. Are you satisfied?"

The young man could not trust himself to speak. He only looked at her; and a dark expression came into his face—such an expression as Olimpia had never seen it wear till that moment.

"Farewell," she said, almost imploringly, and put out her hand.

"Farewell," he replied, and, having held it for a moment in his own, disengaged it gently, and said no more.

She remembered afterwards how cold her own hand was, and how dry and hot was the palm in which it rested.

But a few moments later, and she was kneeling by her bedside in her own far-away chamber, silent and self-reliant no longer, but wringing her hands with a woman's passionate sorrow, and crying aloud:

"Oh, that he could have looked into my heart—that he could only have known how I love him!"

CHAPTER LV. AT ARM'S LENGTH.

THERE was no superfluous guest at Lady Castletowers' table, after all; for Miss Colonna excused herself on the plea of severe headache, and Signor Motecuculi opportunely filled her place. But the dinner proved an effet manqué, notwithstanding. The Earl, though as host he strove to do his best, played the part languidly, and was bitterly sad at heart. Saxon, who had come in covered with dust and foam about five minutes before the dinner was served, looked weary and thoughtful, and all unlike his own joyous self. Giulio Colonna, full of Italian politics, was indisposed for conversation. And so, what with Olimpia's absence, and what with that vague sense of discomfort inseparable from any kind of parting or removal, a general dreariness pervaded the table.

Miss Hatherton, however, was lively and talkative, as usual. Finding Saxon unwontedly silent, she consoled herself with the stranger, and questioned Signor Montecuculi about Sicily and Naples, Calatafimi, Palermo, Garibaldi, and Victor Emmanuel, to her heart's content.

In the mean while, Colonna, sitting at Lady Castletowers' left hand, had been lamenting the non-fulfilment of certain of his plans.

"I had hoped," he said, in a low tone, "that something would have come of it ere this."

"And I had hoped it too, dear friend—for your sake," replied Lady Castletowers, benevolently.

"I had made certain that, knowing how unexpectedly we are called away, he would have spoken to-day; but, on the contrary, he ordered out his horse quite early, and has been in the saddle all day."

"That looks strange."

"Very strange. I wish to Heaven we could have remained with you one week longer."

"But it is not too late to reverse your plans."

Colonna shook his head.

"I can no more reverse them," he said, "than I can reverse the order of the planets."

"Then leave Olimpia with me. She is not fit to go up to town this evening."

"Thanks—I had already thought of that; but she is determined to accompany me."

To which the Countess, who was much more deeply interested in procuring Miss Hatherton's fortune for her son than in securing a wealthy bridegroom for the daughter of her friend, replied, "I am sorry, amico," and transferred her conversation to Mr. Walkingshaw.

But Colonna had not yet played his last card. When the ladies retired, he took the vacant seat at Saxon's right hand, and said:

"Ours is an abrupt departure, Mr. Trefalden; but I trust we shall see you in London."

Saxon bowed, and murmured something about obligation and kindness.

"You are yourself returning to town, I understand, the day after to-morrow."

Saxon believed he was.

"Then you must promise to come and see us. You will find us, for at least the next fortnight, at the Portland Hotel; but after that time we shall probably be bending our steps towards Italy."

Saxon bowed again, and passed the decanters.

Colonna began to see that there was something wrong.

"When friends wish to ensure a meeting," said he, "and we *are* friends, I trust, Mr. Trefalden—their best plan is to make some definite appointment. Will you dine with us on Thursday at our hotel?"

"I am afraid" began Saxon.

"Nay, that is an ominous beginning."

"I have been so long away from town," continued the young man, somewhat confusedly, "and shall have so many claims upon my time for the next few weeks, that I fear I must make no engagements."

Giulio Colonna was utterly confounded. But yesterday, and this young millionnaire would have grasped at any straw of invitation that might have brought him nearer to Olimpia; and now Was he drawing off? Was he offended? He laid his hand on Saxon's arm, and, bending his most gracious smile upon him, said:

"I will not part from you thus, my dear sir. Those who serve my country serve me; and you have been so munificent a benefactor to our cause, that you have made me your debtor for life. I will not, therefore, suffer you to drop away into the outer ranks of mere acquaintanceship. I look upon you as a friend, and as a

friend you must promise to break bread with me before I leave England."

Saxon would have given the best thoroughbred in his stables—nay, every horse that he possessed, and the mail phaeton into the bargain!—only to know at that moment how the Earl had prospered in his wooing. Being ignorant, however, on this point, he made the best reply he could, under the circumstances.

"I will dine with you, if I can, Signor Colonna," he said, bluntly. "At all events, I will call upon you at your hotel; but, until I know how I am situated with—with regard to other friends—I can say nothing more positive."

"Then I suppose I must try to be content," replied the Italian, pleasantly; but he felt that Saxon Trefalden was on his guard, and holding him at arm's length, and, in his heart, he cursed the adverse power that instinct told him was at work against him.

Later in the evening, when they were all gone, and Lady Castletowers had retired, and Saxon remained the only guest in the house, the two young men went down to the smoking-salon—a large, comfortable room adjoining the library, and opening upon the same quiet garden.

"Well?" exclaimed Saxon, eagerly. "What speed?"

The Earl closed the door before replying; and then his answer was significant enough.

"None."

"What do you mean?"

"I mean, Trefalden, that the sooner that yacht is found and we are on the high seas, the better pleased I shall be. She has refused me."

Despite the claims of friendship and his own generous resolves, Saxon's heart gave a joyous bound.

"Refused you!" he said. "On what grounds?"

The Earl flung himself into a chair.

"On patriotic grounds," he replied, gloomily.

"Do you mean because you are English?"

"No—nor yet because she does not love me; but because if she ever gives her hand in marriage, it must be to a man who can 'do more for Italy' than Gervase Wynneclyffe."

"Do more for Italy!" repeated Saxon, slowly.

"Ay—do you know what that means? Why, man, it means that Olimpia Colonna, with all her beauty, purity, and pride of birth, will some day sell herself—sell herself, wrong her husband, and sacrifice me—for her country's sake! If I were as rich as you are, she would marry me. If you were to propose to her to-morrow, she would marry you. If you were old, ugly, ignorant—anything, in short, save a Bourbon or a Hapsburg—she would probably marry you all the same. And yet she loves me!"

"Are you sure of that?"

"I am as certain of it as that she lives and breathes."

"Did—did she admit it?"

"No—but she could not deny it. Besides, I saw it—I felt it. There are times when all men are clairvoyant; and I was clairvoyant then."

Saxon was silent.

"And this is patriotism!" ejaculated Castletowers, bitterly. "I have heard it said that virtues carried to excess become vices; but till now I never believed it. As for the Italian cause I have been a true friend to it, Trefalden—a true and earnest friend, as you well know; but now—I hate it."

And he ground the words out slowly between his teeth, as if he meant them.

After this, they sat together with books and maps before them, planning many things, and talking far into the night.

CHAPTER LVI. GOING TO NORWAY.

"We are going to Norway — Castletowers and I!"

The words were in Saxon's mouth all day long, and Saxon himself was living in a fever of preparation. The men at the Erectheum took a good deal of languid interest in his plans, and were lavish of advice in the matter of Norwegian travel—especially those who had never crossed the Skager Rack in their lives. And Saxon was grateful for it all, buying everything that everybody recommended, and stocking himself in the wildest way with meat-essences, hermetically preserved game and fish, solid soups, ship's biscuit, wines, spirits and liqueurs, fishing-tackle, wading boots, patent tents, polyglot washing-books, Swedish and Norwegian grammars, dictionaries and vocabularies, pocket telescopes, pocket microscopes, pocket revolvers, waterproof clothing, and a thousand other snares of the like nature. Then, besides all these, he ordered a couple of nautical suits, and a gorgeous log-book bound in scarlet morocco, and secured by a Chubb's lock; for Saxon had scorned to hire his yacht—he had bought it, paid for it, christened it, and now meant to play the part of captain and owner thereof, under the due jurisdiction of a competent master.

In all this, Mr. Laurence Greatorex had made himself particularly useful and obliging, having taken the trouble to go down with Saxon to Portsmouth for the purpose of introducing him to a ship-building acquaintance who happened, luckily, to be able to help them to the very thing of which they were in search. It was an American yacht, slight and graceful as an American beauty; and as her owner was anxious to sell and Saxon was eager to buy, the bargain was soon concluded.

Then came the hiring of a competent master and crew; the shipping of Saxon's multitudinous stores; the trial trip round the Isle of Wight; and all the rest of those delightfully business-like preliminaries which make the game of yachting seem so much like earnest. And throughout the whole of this time, Mr. Greatorex—who, to do him justice, was really grateful to his benefactor, and anxious to serve him in

any way not involving the repayment of a certain modest loan—posted backwards and forwards between London and Portsmouth, helped Saxon through innumerable commercial difficulties, and proved himself an invaluable adviser.

It was a busy time for Saxon. He had no leisure for regrets, and perhaps no overwhelming inclination to indulge in them, either. What was his disappointment, after all, compared with the Earl's? A mere scratch beside a deep and deadly wound. Castletowers had loved Olimpia Colonna for four long years—Saxon had been her slave for about as many weeks. Castletowers had confessed to him, in a manly, quiet way, and without the slightest semblance of affectation, that he believed he should never love any other woman—Saxon had no such conviction; but felt, on the contrary, that the best love of his life was yet to come. All these things considered, he was so grieved for his friend that he came to be almost ashamed of his own trouble—nay, was somewhat ashamed to regard his disappointment in the light of a trouble. Olimpia had never cared for him. She had cared for nothing but his wealth; and only for that on account of Italy. Miss Hatherton was right. She had spoken only the literal truth that day, when she compared him to the goose that laid the golden eggs. It was a humiliating truth; but, after all, was it not well for the goose to have escaped with only the loss of an egg or two? So Saxon tried to be philosophic; kept his secret to himself; hurried on the yachting preparations with a will; and set himself to efface Olimpia's beautiful image from his heart as rapidly as possible.

At last all was ready. The yacht rode lightly at anchor in Portsmouth harbour, only waiting for her lord and master to embark; and Saxon, having made his last round of inspection and seen that everything was in order, from the glittering swivel-gun on the foredeck to the no less brilliant pots and pans in the caboose, was speeding up to London, to spend his last evening with William Trefalden.

"Isn't she a little beauty, Greatorex?" said he.

It was the first word that had been spoken since they left Portsmouth.

"I'll tell you what it is, my dear boy," replied the banker, with that engaging familiarity to which so many of his West-end acquaintances had the bad taste to object, "the Albula is just the tautest and trimmest little craft that ever scudded under canvas. If she had been built for you, you could not have had a better fit."

"I wonder what Castletowers will say when he sees her?"

"If he has but half the taste I give him credit for, he will endorse my verdict. Do you meet in London or Portsmouth?"

"In London; and go down together. We hope to weigh anchor about three o'clock in the afternoon."

"And you will be away—how long?"

"From two to three months."

Mr. Greatorex looked thoughtful, and lit a cigar.

"If I can be useful to you while you are out there, Trefalden, you know you may command me," said he. "I mean, if you have any stocks or shares that you want looked after, or any interest got in."

"Thank you very much," replied Saxon; "but my cousin manages all those things for me."

"Humph! And you have no other lawyer?"

"Of course not."

"Would you think it impertinent if I ask how he has disposed of your property? Understand, my dear boy, that I don't want you to tell me if you had rather not; but I should like to know that Mr. Trefalden of Chancery-lane has done the best he can for you."

"Oh, you may take that for granted," said Saxon, warmly.

"We take nothing for granted, east of Temple Bar," replied Greatorex, dryly.

But of this observation his companion took no notice.

"More than half my money was left in the Bank of England," said he, "in government stock."

"Safe; but only three per cent," remarked the banker.

"And the rest is invested in—in a company."

"In what company?" asked Greatorex, quickly.

"Ah, that I may not tell you. It's a secret at present."

The banker looked very grave.

"I am sorry for that," he said.

"Don't be sorry. It's a magnificent enterprise—the grandest thing of the present half century, and a certain success. You'll hear all about it before long."

"Not the South Australian diamond mines, I hope?"

"No, no."

"Did Mr. Trefalden advise the investment?"

"Yes; and has put all his own money into it as well."

"That looks as if he had some faith in it."

"He has perfect faith in it. He is the company's lawyer, you see, and knows all about it."

"And who are the directors?"

"Well, I believe I'm one of them," laughed Saxon.

"And the rest?"

"I haven't the slightest idea."

"But you have met them on board-days?"

"Never. I don't think there have been any board-days at present."

The banker shook his head.

"I don't like it," said he. "I tell you frankly, my dear boy, I don't like it."

"I really see no reason why you should dislike it," replied Saxon.

Mr. Greatorex smoked for some time in silence, and made no reply. After that, the conversation went back to the yacht; and then they talked about Norway, and salmon-fishing, and a thousand other topics connected with the

voyage, till they shook hands at parting, on the platform of the London terminus.

"I wish, upon my soul, Trefalden, that you would entrust me with the name of that company," said the banker, earnestly.

"I cannot."

"It would enable me to keep an eye on your interests while you are away."

"You are most kind," replied Saxon; "but I have promised to keep the secret faithfully, and I mean to do so. Besides, I have absolute confidence in my cousin's discretion."

The City man shrugged his shoulders significantly.

"To tell you the blunt truth, my dear fellow," said he, "I would not trust William Trefalden one inch further than I could see him. There—don't look at me as if I were proposing to blow up the Houses of Parliament. It is a rude thing to say, no doubt; but I am not the only man living who is of that opinion. I don't like William Trefalden. Perhaps you will say that I have good reason to dislike him—and so I have; but that is not it. I am not speaking now from my prejudices, but through my regard for you. You did a very friendly thing by us, in spite of your cousin; and I should rejoice to do something for you in return."

"Also in spite of my cousin, I suppose," replied Saxon, half in jest, and more than half in anger. "No, I thank you, Mr. Greatorex. You mean well, I am sure; but you cannot serve me in this matter—unless by dismissing an unjust prejudice from your mind."

"Wilful man—et cætera! Well, then, Trefalden, good-bye, and bon voyage."

"Good-bye, Mr. Greatorex."

And so they parted.

GOING TO THE "BAD."

"WILL you walk into my Kursaal?" said the Sharper to the Flat;
"'Tis the richest, gayest Kursaal that ever you were at.
The way into my Kursaal is up this granite stair,
And I've got many curious things to show you when you're there."
"Oh, no, no," said the Flat, "because I've sometimes heard it said,
You oft, in change for golden coin, give bullets made of lead."

Said the cunning Sharper to the Flat, "Dear friend, what can I do
To prove the warm and true regard I've always felt for you?
I have within my Kursaal good store of all that's nice,
I'm sure you're very welcome. 'Tis hot, pray take an ice!
Now do walk in," the Sharper said, "for here you're sure to find
A host of wealthy beauties; all the gems of womankind.
I'm sure you'll make a conquest there among their flutt'ring hearts,
For they seek for men of noble mien—for gentlemen of parts.
Win freely at your pleasure from my heaps of glitt'ring gold,
And find that Fortune kindly gives her favours to the bold!"
"I thank you," said the stranger, "for what you're pleased to say,
And wishing you good morning now, I'll call another day."

The Sharper turned him round about, and went into his den,
For well he knew the silly Flat would soon come back again:
So he made a corner ready at his table of roulette,
Where, close by, a brother Sharper winning rapidly was set;
Then he came out to his door again and said with winning wile,
"Come, try your fortune, noble sir, and win this golden pile."

Alas, alas! how very soon this very verdant Flat
Came sidling to the Kursaal, and at the table sat;—
With wistful eyes he saw the prize the cunning Sharper won,
When, heedless of the web of craft that round him had been spun,
Thinking only of his "noble mien," and winning wealth untold,
Forgetting many brother Flats before him had been "sold,"—
He staked his cash, "small by degrees and beautifully less,"—
But who the end of all his hopes—his blighted hopes!—could guess?
The cunning Sharper, ambushed in his roulette-table lair,
Relieved him soon of all he had, then laughed at his despair;
He plucked him at his table, and he fleeced him in his den,
Reduced him to a beggar, and then—drove him out again!

And now, ye Flats who travel, and this sad story read,
To idle, silly, flatt'ring hopes I pray you ne'er give heed;
When Kursaal harpies tempt you, forget not what they're at,
But take a lesson from this tale of Sharpers and the Flat.

HERMIT BOB.

"I WONDER what was the correct pattern of the scrip?" said my friend Bobby Lynn, thoughtfully, as we roamed, an idle pair, along the Ladies' Mile.

"Scrip! What scrip?"

"Bag, satchel, wallet, shoulder-thing, you know," said Bob. "Scrip—from the Swedish 'skräppa'—whence we have 'gripe;' in the vulgar, 'grab.' *Any* scrip. Such, for instance, as hermits usually carry for roots, and—and that sort of fun."

"The last new thing of the scrip sort," I observed, "is announced by Toozeley Brothers, of Rose Conduit-street, as an immense improve-

ment on their celebrated Tient-Tout, which already, as its name implies, held everything. Divided, say the Brothers, into five compartments, thus: a place for your dress-boots, slippers, and gibus. A collar-cell. A——"

"Psha!" said Bob; "I mean the regular hermit machine, plain, grave, capacious, waterproof, adapted, in short, to its sober purposes, and the useful and innocent pursuits of the contented wearer."

"Hallo! Are *you* going to turn solitary?" I asked, with considerable surprise.

"Harry," said Bob, "I——Stop. Take a sweep round here. It's quieter. I have arrived at a very extraordinary determination. Although not recent, it is in a manner associated with an incident that occurred under your eyes not ten minutes ago. We met a low-bodied light-green phaeton, drawn by a pair of nice free-stepping things, silver harness, the whole conducted by a lady in a mauve bonnet, carrying on her whip-shaft a delicate blue toadstool."

"I remember."

"As she shot past, and our eyes met, the toadstool sank between us. Noticing this, the spirit of mischief prompted you to remark, with a pretence of ignorance that would have been absurd if it were not malignant, 'I thought you knew Grace Kersmere—that is, Lady Grace Tattershore.' '*Knew* her!' I responded, using my chest-notes. There I stopped."

"All this I accept as history. Proceed."

"*I*," resumed Mr. Lynn, after a deglutition, as if he had successfully bolted a small apple, "I, sir, was the tenth man jilted by that lady. She was, as you are aware, an heiress, independent of her parents; a circumstance which does not, in practice, fortify the authority of those parties. Grace, in fact, was accustomed to do pretty much as she pleased. Engagements were her monomania. To such a degree did she indulge the predilection for betrothment, that, at the period when I found an explanation absolutely necessary, Miss Kersmere was regularly affianced to no less than three individuals, irrespective of a conditional understanding with a cousin in New Zealand, and an extensive range of general flirtation at home!"

"Did she propose to marry the *three?*"

"I cannot say," replied Bob, calmly. "Perhaps the difficulties of a threefold engagement might have been enough for her. Genius, however, will do a great deal. Accident—treachery, *she* called it—alone brought matters to a crisis. We three unconscious rivals, happening to be all in town at the same time, it became expedient to appoint us our respective beats, morning, afternoon, evening. I was myself on afternoon, or croquet duty, when, by the merest chance, happening to drop in in the morning man's time, I became aware that she was affianced—in addition to myself and Charley Sartorius—to Sir Talbot Tattershore—whom, in the perplexity arising from this unlucky clash, she, unintentionally, married. You heard of the singular, not to say preternatural incident, that attended the ceremony?"

"No, I did not. What was it?"

"They were married, by the united efforts of several of the clergy, at St. Winifred's the Less. Just before the appointed hour, a gentleman, not, perhaps, strictly handsome, but of highly prepossessing aspect and demeanour, still more improved by a touch of sadness, accosted the pew-opener with a request for a seat, at a convenient distance from the altar."

"Say frankly it was yourself."

"Ha! Well guessed," said Bob; "but you'll hardly foresee what follows. The pew-opener, after a moment's irresolution, arising perhaps from her knowledge of Miss Kersmere's history, and a fear that I might attend for the purpose of forbidding the banns—ended by placing me in a commodious pew, but slightly removed from the interesting scene. Scarcely was I seated, when I noticed a second gentleman, evidently preferring a similar request. He, likewise, wore a subdued and mournful air, and the vergeress—probably esteeming us fit companions—led the way to my pew, and introduced into it Jacob Protheroe—the man she was engaged to at Naples! Well, sir, we had barely exchanged nods, when, by Jove! our party was augmented by the entrance of Lord Edward Snitcher, and his long cousin, Tom Preedy, who fought about her at Bruges, and were both pinked—and jilted. Them followed little Contrebasso, the music-master, to whom it was said Miss had given a written contract of marriage. Presently, at the end of the pew, I became aware of the long visage of old Witherspin, of the Blues; and, finally, to crown all, the indefatigable female hitched into the pew a tall ungainly youth, with large ears, blushing to their very tips, whom Protheroe, in a choked whisper, pronounced to be young Quentery, the son of one of Kersmere's Shropshire tenants, whose bucolic heart Miss Kersmere had broken, as the Laureate hath it, 'for pastime, ere she went to town.' There, sir, we sat—the pew-opener standing sentry over us, with a half-pitying, half-disdainful air—as if we had been convicts, or a batch of doubtful sheep in a separate pen. I have often wondered whether the placing us all together in that conspicuous position, when there were scores of pews vacant, was the jade's joke or not! Escape was out of the question, for hardly had young Quentery's left ear shown symptoms of regaining its natural hue, when its relapse into the deepest crimson announced the approach of the wedding-party. Grace leaned upon her father's arm, looking radiant as the day, and—(shameless flirt and jilt!) the impersonation of artless innocence. Whether she regarded our presence as a compliment or otherwise, it was impossible to say. I think I know which party looked most foolish. I am *sure* I know which felt most embarrassed. As Tattershore led her from the altar, she suddenly stopped, faced round, surveyed us with one slow, sweeping glance of scorn, dropped a stately curtsey,

and vanished. At that moment, a resolution, already flickering in my mind, became fixed as fate. I determined to quit for ever the haunts of a social polity where such treachery as this can be practised without penalty or reproach—is tolerated, smiled at, forgiven. Harry, it is my intention to become, in the completest sense of the word, a hermit."

"Are you in earnest? A hermit? My dear Bob, in these days——"

"Is an anachronism," interposed Mr. Lynn, calmly. "I will meet that as I may. But, Harry, an expression that has just escaped you reminds me of a little point. You are among the few who will be ever welcome to my cell. I shall take it as a great favour if you will use a somewhat less familiar mode of address—no recluse (and I have given some attention to the point) having, so far as my inquiries lead, been usually accosted as 'Bob,' 'Bobby,' or any of the diminutives of that name, which I shall, on the contrary, extend to Roberto—Fra Roberto, the Solitary."

"Rely upon it, old boy——"

"Old boy," interrupted the intended hermit, "is open to the same objection."

"Excuse me. But really, Lynn, this is the most singular resolution. And as sudden as it is strange."

"Strange, if you like," said Bob, "but not sudden. It was my boyhood's dream."

"Very likely. But manhood's reality——"

"I have made it the subject of much anxious consideration," said Bob, "even to the minutest details. My dress, my habitation, my diet, my line of life, my course of meditation. Henceforward—that is, from Tuesday fortnight, when I dine with my Aunts Pentwhistle, at Twickenham—I take cognisance of this world exclusively through the loopholes of retreat—or one of them," concluded Mr. Lynn.

"Snug lurking-places enough," said I, "though not absolutely warranted against the chance of a splinter in the eye."

"If there be anything ironical concealed in that observation," said Bob, stiffly, "permit me to remind you that there is no disgrace in refraining from a conflict in which you are not specially invited to participate."

"Granted. Should you, however, light upon a friend, in that stage of garrotte which might prohibit his conveying to you that special invitation—how then?"

"That," said Bob, impatiently, "is a particular case. I never heard of shame or discredit attaching to those who have voluntarily quitted the conflict of the world."

"Nor I either. It's a matter of taste and personal comfort. Still——"

"Still, *what?*"

"Why, you see, a man may perch himself on a windmill, beyond shell practice, and very much enjoy a battle. But that gallant example has been rarely found to exercise any beneficial influence on his fellow-men; and, hence, the public tributes (at least, of a gratifying nature) paid to such warriors have been few."

"I don't want any public tributes," said Bob. "The world doesn't want *me*, nor I the world. Society is based on the falsest principles. It is planted in a slough, from which all the moral sewerage, perpetually in action, cannot withdraw the noxious elements. The entire fabric being in an advanced state of decomposition, I hope I may be excused for making my bow before I am stifled in its fragrant fall."

"Better stay, and help to reconstruct it on sanitary principles of your own, Bobby," said I.

"We had better part—for the moment—I think," said Bob, gravely. "This is not a scene, (How do, Wopshott?) nor are you (Good morning, Lady Dunsandle) in a mood, to discuss such matters (Ha! Twisken) in a fitting tone." We were now at Hyde Park Corner. "Call in Half-Moon-street, if you think proper, to-morrow," added Bob, "about four, and you shall then see whether I am in earnest, or not."

"Good. This time to-morrow."

"Four, *in the morning*," said Lynn.

"In the *morning!*"

"Certainly. I am in training for my recluse habits," said Bob; "and what I may be excused for terming the 'dress rehearsals,' take place at that hour. However, twelve hours later will suit me as well—and *you*, it may be, better. I shall expect thee, son. Benedicite. Hansom!"

And, in one of those rapid conveyances, Bob departed.

The apartments at this time occupied by the misanthrope were singularly luxurious. Bath-room, chamber, library, breakfast-room, divan—all and each were the perfection of comfort, elegance, and taste. Anything less suggestive of the simple habits of the hermit's cell I had never seen. Lynn was an inveterate smoker, and when, punctual to my appointment, I entered the familiar doors, the future anchorite was reclining on his Persian couch, clad in a rich brocade dressing-robe, smoking a narghilé, and sipping a cool glass of Beaujolais.

My first idea was that the recluse fancy had passed away. Far from it. Bob at once plunged into the subject.

"I have sold all these gimcracks," he said, glancing at his superb furniture with an eye of scorn, "and let the shells" (rooms, I concluded). "In that single packing-case is comprised all that 'little' which man—in his recluse state—is poetically supposed to 'want.' Cast your eye over it."

Nailed upon the open lid was a list of the contents, which appeared to be these: Iron bed-frame, small oaken table, three-legged stool, wooden spade, six wooden platters, a wooden spoon, a salt-box, and a stewpan.

Simplicity itself. But why, I asked, this predominance of timber?

Mr. Lynn replied that he preferred that material, as combining the three characteristics of cleanliness, portability, and innocence. Nothing approaching to a weapon, even of defence, should be found in the dwelling of one who,

having resigned everything pilferable, could no longer dread his brother-man.

"Behold my simple apparel," said Bob, twitching aside a curtain that hung against the wall. "Winter gown, summer gown."

Both were comfortable-looking robes enough—with ample folds, reaching nearly to the feet, hoods, and girdles.

"I think, sir, this is about the article," said Bob, with some complacency, as he threw the wide skirts across his arm. "One sole departure I have permitted myself from the accredited costume. Not to be confounded with the new order of B. F. B.s—barefooted boobies—I shall retain my socks and Balmorals."

"Whatever morals you leave behind, I should certainly keep the bals," I observed, lightly. "But now—how about eating?" I hastened to add.

"Behold my kitchen!" replied Bob, patting his stewpan encouragingly.

"Ha! you do mean to cook, it seems?"

"Why—slightly," said Bob. "There are herbs, and roots also (I may, I think, include the potato), which are improvable, for table purposes, by the agency of fire. By-the-by, look at this."

He unfolded a sort of scroll, something resembling that which records the names of the "thousand-and-three" victims to Giovanni's fatal love.

"Here are one hundred-and-thirty-seven distinct methods of dressing the potato."

"It is not the fact, then, that hermits confine their eating to the natural products of the soil?"

"In a crude state, no. The coats of a hermit's stomach are not expressly lined for the purpose," said Mr. Lynn, with some impatience. "I stick to my text. Roots. Well, potatoes are roots. On the other hand, peas, beans—broad and French—asparagus—and a lot besides—are excluded from my larder, simply because they are not 'roots.'"

"A radical defect indeed!" said I.

"I shall get on very tidily," said the intending hermit. "There are fruits, you know. 'My scrip, with herbs and fruits' (you perceive) 'supplied.' Ah—my friend!"

"I would not rely upon the 'mountain's grassy side' for much in *that* line," said I. "By the way, how about the Beaujolais?" I added, sipping the fragrant fluid.

"'And water from the spring,'" quoted Bob; for the present, however, following my example.

"There could at least be no objection to Hermitage!"

"'And water from the spring,'" repeated Bob, firmly, ignoring my little jest. "The water in the neighbourhood of my retreat is exceedingly fine—a light, dry, pleasant, stomachic water, sir. That was one of my reasons for selecting the spot I have chosen."

"You have not told me where it is."

"Let me explain at once, my dear boy," said Bob, "and be you one of the earliest to lift the ever-ready latch of the recluse's cell. There will always be a ham, or a tongue, a grouse-pie, or something of that sort, in cut."

"Hallo, anchorite!"

"For my guests—my guests," said Bob, hastily. "Never shall the famished and belated traveller be chidden from my door!"

"Is the place so wild and isolated?"

"It is in one of the loveliest and most populous of our western counties."

"Indeed! And yet secluded? You are lucky, in these days, to have hit on such a spot."

"Well, it was no easy matter," replied Bob. "Listen, Harry. You consult your Bradshaw. You find that a branch of the Great Southland Railway conveys you to Tibbley Junction, from whence you take the eastern portion of the loop-line as far (remember this) as Burngallows. Hence, a short branch conducts you to Bishops-Pyewall-road; after which you have it all plain sailing to Hawbridge. Here, by order, two days before, you can, provided it be not market-day in any of the neighbouring towns, obtain some species of trap to take you on to Chandler's Ford, ten miles and a half. You may then consider yourself at home, since there remains but a six-mile ferry to Sea Palling, where you first enter upon the outlying portion of my friend Sir Quigley Quantock's property, in some eligible nook of whose very extensive woods I propose to take up my permanent abode. You understand?"

"Perfectly. Stay—let me see. I take my Bradshaw—and I—humph—my Brads——"

"There's a shorter way by sea," interrupted Bob, "discovered by some Columbus, on his way to Babley-Patterton regatta."

"I think I should prefer the sea way," said I. "Shall you be there in August?"

"Only for the remnant of my pilgrimage," replied Bob, relapsing into sentiment.

"What if you live to a hundred? Hermits generally do. My dear old boy, what upon earth will you do with yourself?"

"My existence," answered Bob, "will be one of child-like innocence. I shall smoke and meditate."

"Without disparagement to those truly infantine pursuits, one must at least be thankful, for the sake of progress, that the general body of mankind are not seized with a similar fancy. But, you yourself—without companions—without——"

"Companions!" exclaimed Bob. "What better companions can thoughtful man desire than the ever-changing, soul-entrancing aspects of nature? The babbling brooklet—the fleecy cloudlet——"

"Portending the stormlet," I put in.

"The—the whole lot of meteorological phenomena," said Bob, frowning, "and that sort of thing; such will be *my* associates. They cannot betray."

"I beg your pardon. For treachery and mendacity I'll back your barometer——"

"Psha!" said Bob. "These exhausted, I

turn me to my sheltering woods—my neighbour oaks—my—other thingamies—and, fixing my gaze upon some gnarled trunk, I—I shall—*think*," said Bob.

"One mode of taking a course of bark!" I ventured to observe. "But even that source of mental vigour may be exhausted. *Then?*"

"My resolution is unshaken," replied Bob, with a mournful smile. "Out of the world I go—on Wednesday fortnight."

"Well, my friend, I am sorry for this determination, and the more so, as I cannot but feel that the cause is most inadequate."

"*I* am the best judge of that," said Bob. "Harry—*she* was the only woman I ever loved."

"But, dear old boy, did everybody who is jilted take to the woods, what a sylvan population we should have!"

"I am not influenced *solely* by the—the circumstance to which you, not obscurely, refer," said Bob. "Harry, I am the victim of a noble discontent. I am an ambitious man. Possessed of talents above the average, but rendered infructuous through a certain difficulty of ascertaining in what direction they lie, I find myself condemned to an insignificance abhorrent to my soul. Were I rich, old fellow, all would be well. My abilities would at once command the respect they deserve. But here again I fail. I have six hundred a year. Disgusting income! Of all the peddling little prizes in fortune's wheel, six hundred a year is the most embarrassing. I wish it were practicable to toss up with the blind goddess whether it should be six thousand or nothing! You're for ever dodging about the tail of it, neither actually *out* of debt, nor plunging honestly *into* it. In embracing solitude, I resign all the dreams of love and ambition. I owe nothing. My very tailor is paid. Disarmed, stingless, he melts into the common herd, and is forgotten. My frame will be covered by two gowns—my other needs, by thirty pounds a year. The residue of my property will accumulate, so as to form a fund which, after my decease, will be devoted to the outfit, biennially, of six hermits, of disappointed views, but irreproachable character. You will allow me to name you as one of the trustees?"

I pressed my friend's hand in token of acquiescence, and, shortly after, took my leave—not (to say truth) without a painful suspicion that the disappointment poor Lynn had experienced had acted more unhealthily upon his mind than his friends were aware.

Engagements prevented my revisiting London for three weeks. I then found Lynn's rooms empty and dismantled. He had, I was informed, sold every individual article he possessed—save only the clothes he stood in and his favourite pipe—and departed, with the packing-case, leaving no address whatever. It was manifest, therefore, that he had actually carried his singular project into effect.

This conclusion was shortly rendered certain, by my receiving a letter from the recluse himself. Although I could distinguish the postmark of Sea Palling, it seemed to have made an extended tour in Devon, Cornwall, and the Scilly Isles, and was at least six weeks old when it reached my hands.

Bob—I beg his pardon, Fra Roberto—wrote in the most enthusiastic terms of his new mode of life. His bower was a woodcutter's abandoned hut, situated in an oaken glade, well sheltered from the colder breezes, yet within a few minutes' walk of points which commanded a noble stretch of sea, while, in other directions, a tolerably dense woodland district invited the recluse to those sylvan contemplations from which he expected to derive such solace.

The seclusion, he declared, was all he could possibly desire—the nearest hamlet being four miles distant, and, so far as he, Bob, knew, the nearest dwelling not within *three*.

"Quantock," continued the solitary, "has been most kind, prohibiting his keepers, woodmen, &c., from approaching my haunts, while he gives me 'carte blanche' to do what I please in the forest. I am, in fact, 'monarch of all I survey,' and have literally seen nothing but 'the fowl and the brute,' including, in the latter term, a poaching vagabond whom, thinking him belated, I welcomed to my cell. I had, it happened, nothing but my own frugal feast—a lettuce and some blackberries, with some excellent water—to set before him. With this 'guiltless' fare he did not seem highly satisfied, and, probably as an indemnification, when he departed, took away my boots, and, what I feel severely, my stewpan. Irrespective of this little accident, I am as happy as possible. I have not a fear or a care in the world, and the confidence that I shall never again see a human face, except yours, my friend, and, say, a couple more, completes my felicity. Come and witness it.—ROBERTO.

P.S. You will remember the directions I gave you as to the road. Once within the Quantock property, steer S.S.W. half W. Perhaps the enclosed plan of sheep-tracks may help you across the hills. But, for goodness' sake, no *guide*. My retreat *must* not be known."

The enclosed "plan" resembled nothing so much as the skeleton of an umbrella with the ribs entangled. In the centre was a huge (disconnected) blot, meant, I suppose, to represent the hermit's abode.

Now, I had agreed to spend some weeks, that summer, yachting with a friend, and as Smijthe (he was very particular about his j) was rather addicted to dawdling about the coast, within easy reach of fresh butter and the Times, I expected that an opportunity might occur of attacking Sea Palling on its waterface. It did.

On a lovely noon in August we ran into a small estuary, flanked by higher cliffs than I had thought existed in those parts, and dropped anchor off a little village. Its only visible inhabitant—an exceedingly infirm and ancient mariner—paddled promptly off in a canoe, and asked if we wanted any nice fresh fish—heaving into view, as a temptation, what we should have

taken for a younger brother of the sea-serpent, had not our steward pronounced it to be a conger, weighing at least ninety pounds!

"Chaps like *he*," the venerable aborigine assured us, "was frequently took in the bay."

Declining the wallowing monster, even at the reduced price of one-and-nine, and leaving the ancient mariner to chat with the crew, Smijthe and I jumped into the dingy and sculled ashore.

Arrivals by sea were evidently not common; for several natives, who had been slumbering on a fragrant couch of compost, in which sea-drift and mussel-shells freely intermingled, arose, stretched themselves, and came down to meet, or rather stare at, us.

"Was this Sea Palling?"

"No; 'twere Falcombe."

"Then where *was* Sea Palling?"

"Four mile to the west'ard."

"Was it difficult to find?"

"'Pends on what we was a-looking for."

"Why, the town."

"Town! Sea Palling ain't a town. There's a pot-hus and a post-hus, but not much else. If the gents wished to go anywhere on squire's—Sir Quigley Quantock's—land, one of them could show the way."

Remembering Bob's caution, I was on my guard.

"I—I am going to Sir Quigley's; but as to a guide——"

"Squire's in Hitterley," put in a native. "If he warn't, he's never here. There ain't no house, you know."

"I know—that is, I suppose so. The fact is, I wish to make a hasty sketch or two in the woods. The thicker woods. If one of you will put me in the path, that is all I require."

A hasty consultation ensued among the natives, in the course of which, if there be any significance in the rise and fall of a halfpenny, I was submitted to the arbitration of fortune, after which, bidding my friend a temporary farewell, I set forth with my guide.

Avoiding, as I found we might, the village, we were quickly on the wild down, and following a track which seemed to point towards a well-wooded district, on the landward slope of the hills, about five miles off. This, my guide remarked, was all on the squire's property.

It was a wild quest, but, faithful to Bob's injunctions, I here dismissed my native, and proceeded alone.

Scarcely a sign or sound of life interrupted my meditations as I strode along, until, feeling a little fatigued, I sat down upon a large boulder, and consulted Bob's "plan." I might as well have consulted the works of Confucius in the original manuscript! One track, however, took my fancy, and, as it bore in the direction Bob had told me to "steer," I followed that.

On, and on—I was passing trees, and clumps of trees; but as the woodland became denser my difficulties increased. Where, in this trackless forest, was I to seek my hermit?

Not trackless! I became suddenly conscious of wheel-marks, and the dint of horse-hoofs crossing hither and thither. Wood-wains? No. The traces were too narrow, and too light, and the horses that drew these vehicles had small and shapely feet. The recluse, then, has not been able to isolate himself so utterly as he had hoped. Perhaps he has retired to some still remoter spot in the heart of the sheltering wood, where not even the chance wayfarer—— Hallo!

A distant bugle: "Bright chanticleer proclaims the morn." Undoubtedly—but why *here*, and *now*? The air suddenly glided, with astonishing dexterity, into "Oh the roast beef of Old England," with the usual supplementary assurance, in a varied form, that the institution is peculiarly British—and, round an angle of the wood, came swinging, at ten miles an hour—can I believe my eyes?—a well-appointed, rather rakish-looking, four-horse 'bus! From certain streamers disposed about the horses, and a little banner fluttering on the vehicle itself, it had all the appearance of being on its way to a fair—especially as the fourteen passengers on the outside, not to mention the twelve within, seemed to be in the highest possible merriment.

As the phenomenon swept past, I had time to read, in large characters on the panel, "The Hermit. Twice a day. There and back: Half-a-crown—driver included."

In passing, several of the mirthful party had wafted affectionate greetings towards the solitary traveller; but the driver, with a civil gesture, pointed backward with his whip. The movement was presently explained by the appearance of a second conveyance—this time a pair-horse stage-coach, of the species now so nearly extinct.

Laden as it was, the coachman pulled up, and touched his hat.

"'Ermit, sir? 'Ermit? Make room for one a side o' *me*."

I shook my head.

"T'other's coming, sir," said the driver, "if you likes *he* better. He've got one place."

He drove on. On the back of the vehicle was its name:—"The Friar Tuck." (Ah, Bob!) "One Shilling."

T'other one was not far off. Round the corner came, jolting and jingling, a rickety burlesque of that obsolete form of London cab, in which the driver balanced himself on a perch at the side, two passengers occupying the body. It was drawn by a broken-down hack, which embraced the first opportunity of stopping, as the driver, checking him, pointed to the vacant seat. I shook my head. The vehicle tottered forward. At its back there dangled a placard—its name, "The Fra Roberto. Ninepence."

It was but too clear. Lynn's haunt had been

discovered, and the sensitive recluse was being exhibited at half-a-crown, one shilling, and ninepence each!

I could not approach my poor friend in such company, but, noting the direction taken by the 'bus, it struck me that, by making a dive through the thicket, I might possibly anticipate their arrival. Hardly had I entered, when a familiar voice pronounced my name. I started round. It was Bob himself!

He was ensconced in a sort of arbour made of boughs, so closely interwoven that I had passed him almost within arm's length without notice.

"'Sh!" said Bob, with his finger on his lip; "I've sold them splendidly. How lucky you cut through here! Sit down, Harry, my boy, and I'll tell you all about it."

The hermit wore his summer robe—a by no means unbecoming garment. His hair and beard had grown to an inordinate length, and he himself was so much thinner as to convince me that his root-and-water diet had been no mere pretence.

"We are safe *now*," said Bob. "Harry, you were in the right; I *am*" (with a melancholy smile) "an anachronism. The world has recognised that fact, and comes twice a day (besides pic-nics) to remind me of it. You remember the poacher I spoke of? That villain betrayed me. Within a few days of his visit, I began to be conscious of the occasional vicinity of my kind. Cigar-ends, sandwich-papers, a battered umbrella, are not the ordinary products of a wilderness. Distant human voices mingled inharmoniously with the sylvan sounds. At least, I am aware of no British beast—man excepted—that is in the habit of insisting, in chorus, and for a considerable time together, that he is a 'jolly dog.' It was plain that these intruders purposely haunted my locality. I believe they peeped at me through the boughs. Guessing this, I secluded myself more. Then came messages, improvised, of course: 'Best compliments—could the hermit oblige some ladies with the loan of a rolling-pin?' 'A party of tourists, having forgotten the mustard, would the Fra," &c. &c.

"I thought Sir Quigley had expressly forbidden such intruders."

"He had," said Bob. "I therefore wrote to him on the subject. Answer returned by agent—a Mr. Bobbery, or Bolberry. Poor Quig was lying dangerously ill at Milan. A retired solicitor had settled at Falcombe, and, wanting something to do, stirred up an old quarrel as to right of way across Quantock's woods. By Jove, sir, they carried it, and the first result was the establishment of the cavalcade you beheld, 'working,' as they call it, from Falcombe to a most romantic spot in the heart of the forest, and, says the bill, 'within a stone's throw of the celebrated Hermit's Cave.' I was sorely tempted to test the truth of this latter announcement by practical experiment," concluded my friend.

"What shall you do, now?" I asked. "Come back, I hope, with me. You have had your fancy. Enough."

"Never," said the hermit. "I am content, if they would only let me alone. Yesterday I came to the resolution to abandon my cell during the day, and conceal myself here. When they find there is no chance of seeing me, the 'jolly dogs' may hold their orgies elsewhere. My door has but the latch, but I think they will respect *that*. At six o'clock we may go home."

Dear old Bob had judged too much by his own heart, which, eccentric as he was, was that of a true gentleman. Whether in thoughtlessness, or in mischief, the sanctity of his bower had been rudely violated. The jolly dogs had dined there, and, to all appearance, passed a very jolly time! Nothing, indeed, had been abstracted; on the contrary, the corks, bottles, broken plates, &c., not to mention pie-crust, bones, lobster-shells, &c.—bequeathed to the anchorite—might have filled a small wheelbarrow.

I was yet gazing on the relics, when I heard Bob utter an exclamation. He had clutched a fragment of newspaper on which his eye had fallen. His face was pale and agitated.

"I—I had striven to forget her," he stammered, "and here, even here, like a ghost, she haunts me still!"

The paragraph to which he pointed announced that Lady Tattershore, who (readers would remember) had become a widow some time before, during a residence at Cairo, would, at the expiration of her mourning, bestow her hand, and her twenty-five thousand a year, upon the Marquis of Queerfish.

"Tattershore was a brute, and Queerfish is a worse," groaned Bob, dropping the paper from his hand.

His passion had never been eradicated. He had, as it were, forcibly banished this woman's image from his mind; but the circumstance so singularly brought to his notice caused it to return with such force, that poor Bob, already worried and perplexed with the invasion of his solitude, could not regain his tranquil mood.

One thing was plain—that all hope of peace, in his present retreat, was at an end. I have not space to tell by what arguments I prevailed upon Bob to accept the loan of a spare suit I had fortunately brought in my knapsack, to cut his hair, to pack up his hermit attire, and, abandoning all else, embark with me in the hospitable bark of my friend Smijthe; nor how the latter received him with the greatest kindness, and, conveying him to Dieppe, put him on the way to his new destination—Switzerland.

From the latter country Bob wrote once, informing me that he had pitched his tent, or cabin, this time (as he hoped) *above* the world, on a mountain-side, above Martigny. In vain. A path had been found, outflanking and overtopping the hermit, and a huge telescope, mounted, like a gun, swept his position at all hours of the day. Bob went higher. A mem-

ber of the Alpine Club assailed him by a new route, and discovered a platform so convenient, that a small neat edifice was at once erected there, and the Hôtel de l'Hermite became a favourite excursion from Martigny.

In despair, poor Bob travelled into a secluded district of Westphalia, and here occurred the strange event that concludes this narrative.

My friend, the Baroness d'Ubique, having kindly offered me the use, for some months, of a residence of hers, something between a farm-house and a castle, in Westphalia, I set forth to occupy it. It was haunted (hence, perhaps, the easy terms of my tenancy); but I rather like ghosts, and the baroness knew it.

Halting to sleep in a certain village, the name at once struck me as having been mentioned by Lynn in his first letter from these parts. In the second, and last, he had given me no address whatever.

Sending for the landlord, I asked him if British travellers often came this road.

Not unfrequently, was the answer. (Poor Bob!) There were even English residents at no great distance. On one side there lay a large property belonging to an English miladi. On the other, there was—or there might be, for he was said to be dead, or, at least, dying—a British gentleman, mad, but harmless as a child, who wears——

"A gown? A beard?"

"Both."

I was in the saddle in five minutes, and, well guided, was, in thirty more, by Bob's bedside. Not too soon. The dear old fellow, worn to a very shadow, lay, as it seemed, expecting his end. An old peasant woman, his sole attendant, crouched in a corner of the hut.

Bob recognised me, but his mind perpetually wandered. He believed that he had been many years a recluse, and, identifying himself in his mental weakness with Goldsmith's Hermit, talked constantly of his "Angelina," avowing his persuasion that she, who had been the star of his life, would once more visit him, if but to receive his last breath.

In spite of poor Lynn's debilitated condition there was something in his appearance that seemed to encourage hope. I must obtain medical advice, and that as promptly as possible. He had fallen into quiet slumber, and I galloped back to the inn.

There was no good medical advice near at hand; but, said the landlord, the English miladi (who arrived at the castle last Monday) always brought with her her own English doctor. Doubtless, *he* might come to his compatriot.

"The miladi's name? Quick."

It was not to be said quickly. "Trek—Thwack—Trek—Träk—Tattersh——"

"Tattershore!"

"Yes—well—so—Tattershore!"

I had no time for wonder at this strange fatality. I despatched a note to miladi, suppressing, of course, Bob's name. It was answered by the doctor in person, a gentle, grey-haired man, but with clear intelligent eyes, in which, occasionally, there sparkled a touch of humour.

We became such friends, that, on our way back from a visit to the hermit, I told him *all*. Dr. Thurgood listened with attention, and fell into deep thought.

"I am much in Lady Tattershore's confidence," he said. "I know more of her feelings than—than I have a right to tell. I may tell you *this*—she has been for years a changed woman. Her unhappy married life did that good for her. Gentle, quiet, loving, if ever she marries again—(how lucky she refused Lord Queerfish!)—happy will be the man! There is but one way of dealing with *this* case of ours," added the doctor, with a laughing gleam in his eye. "As I'm a man and a doctor, I'll try it! Ask no questions, and express no surprise."

He wrung my hand and vanished.

Next day a carriage drove up to the inn, and Lady Tattershore, accompanied by the doctor, receiving me with a sweet, and, I thought, grateful smile, invited me to go with them to the hermitage. Arrived there, Thurgood begged me to sit by my friend until he should join me. Poor Lynn was very weak and wandering.

"I am dying, Harry, and she will not come. Oh, she will never—never come!"

That statement was instantly falsified. His next words were: "My life! My all in life!" Kneeling, weeping, the lady was there, clasping his wasted hand.

Mr. Lynn did not die. He resides principally at Florence, where, in his beautiful palace, adored by his wife, whom he has a fancy for calling Angelina though her name is Grace, he sees a good deal of the world he has abjured, and bears it remarkably well.

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AT THE BAR.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "A CRUISE UPON WHEELS," &c. &c.

CHAPTER VII. NEITHER A DINNER OF HERBS NOR A STALLED OX.

IT was really a curious thing as a study to observe how profound a mistress of the art of being disagreeable was our friend Miss Carrington. To her own friends who came to see her she would complain (whenever she could do so before the unfortunate Gabrielle) of the inconveniences which she had to endure. Miss Carrington's friends in London were not numerous, but they made up for it in spitefulness. They were perpetually trying to make her alter her plans, and one lady especially, who was known by the name of Preedy, was always persuading her dear friend to remove to a certain boarding-house near at hand, where she—Miss Preedy—had resided for upwards of a twelvemonth.

"You've no idea," Miss Preedy would say, "what good company we are. We're never dull, our meals are feasts in season with the flowing bowl." There seems reason to believe that in saying these words Miss Preedy imagined herself to be making use of a well-known quotation. "And then," she would continue, "we are all well connected, you know; people with whom you would not be ashamed to be seen talking. There's General Scrope, who heads the table—a man whom anybody might be proud to know. And such conversation—such flow of anecdote as that man possesses. Then there's Lady Groves, charming person, hires her brougham almost every day, and keeps it standing at the door a good three-and-sixpennyworth of the time, and giving quite a distinguished aspect to the house. Though as to carriages, there are times when you'll see as many as three or four before the door at once, and the horses champing their bits make it all feel quite aristocratic. Now come and live among us, Diana dear, and you'll see how you'll be understood and made much of, and I'm sure Mrs. Penmore wouldn't mind, would you, ma'am. You know you'd easily get another lodger."

To which Mrs. Penmore, turning very red, would reply, "That Miss Carrington was a relation, a cousin, indeed, of Mr. Penmore's, and that if she saw any reason for changing her place of abode she would have no successor;" and then Mrs. Penmore would take an early opportunity of getting away out of the room, and would break her heart by herself in private.

"Seems rather proud, your relation," Miss Preedy would remark. "Ah, you may depend upon it you'd be better with us in Wimpole-street, and so much more cheerful."

Or another kind of temptation would be held out by another of Miss Carrington's friends, a widow this time, and one not bred at St. James's.

"Take a little 'ouse," this lady would suggest, "that's what I'd do, if I were you—a nice little 'ouse, with your own things about you, and your own servants, and your own way. I've got a little 'ouse myself, and I find it answer, and therefore it is that I recommend you to get one too; and here's Mrs. Cantanker here, I'm sure you agree with me, Jane, don't you?"

"Ah, mum," would be the reply of the personage thus appealed to, "and that you may be sure I do, and many and many's the time that I've begged and implored my mistress to have a place of her own, and not be at the mussy of anybody, be it who it may."

But Miss Carrington would always reply, with the air of a martyr, "That it could not be; that Mr. Penmore"—she never alluded to Gabrielle, who, however, in this case would not be present—"that Mr. Penmore was her relation, that his circumstances were somewhat embarrassed, and that she would not, on any account, withdraw her assistance, unless, indeed, anything should occur that might make it inevitable. That she was altogether comfortable, or that her good Jane Cantanker was altogether comfortable, she could not, consistently with truth, assert, far from it. But she was determined to stick by her relative to the last, though if, indeed, circumstances should occur rendering a separation unavoidable, then she would certainly think of what her friend Miss Preedy, or her friend the widow lady" (as the case might be), "had so kindly suggested."

Then at dinner-time, the period selected always for agreeable remarks, Miss Carrington would retail the substance of what had recently transpired, taking care to show plainly what an estimable character she was, and how she was sacrificing her own comfort and advantage to that of her relatives. And here the virtuous Cantanker would be brought into the conversa-

tion, whenever her influence seemed likely to assist in backing her mistress up. This was one of the things which Penmore found the most difficult to endure of all. His detestation for Jane Cantanker was something ferocious, and hardly to be concealed. He said it took his appetite away to see her standing there behind her mistress's chair watching everything and listening to everything, with her mistress appealing to her continually, and seeming to receive every word she said as if it fell from the lips of an oracle.

"I've had a gentleman visitor to-day," said Miss Carrington one day at dinner-time, and speaking with an infernal and aggravating sprightliness. "Haven't I, Cantanker?"

"Yes, miss," replied the lady, slowly and sententiously, "a terew gentleman."

It is impossible to say how it was done, but it is certain that Miss Cantanker managed to convey in these words the impression that Gilbert was *not* a "terew gentleman."

"I thought I heard a heavier footstep than usual on the stairs," remarked Gabrielle, who was always ready to talk on any subject that promised peacefully.

"What sharp ears you have," retorted Miss Carrington; and then with restored cheerfulness, "and a military gentleman, too—wasn't he, Jane?"

"Capting Shaver, 'alf-pay," replied Cantanker, in the same solemn tone, "and a terew gentleman."

"He's withdrawn from the service," continued Miss Carrington, "and has made quite a study of health and medicine, and that sort of thing, and is really an authority. And he tells me that the aspect of my room is all wrong, and that I can never be well unless I am fronting the sun."

"I am afraid, as the house isn't upon castors, that we can't turn it round to the south, even to please Captain Shaver." This was the remark of Mr. Penmore, who, if the truth must be owned, was disposed to be rather rude to his cousin at times. But then was there not cause, and was not the presence of Cantanker enough in itself to justify a small amount of incivility? "There's your bedroom has the morning sun upon it. You might make that your sitting-room, and use the other for a bedroom."

"Ah, but Captain Shaver says that a sunny aspect for one's bedroom is even more important than for one's sitting-room. Doesn't he, Cantanker?"

"That was his remark, miss," replied the domestic.

Gilbert, in confidence to his plate, expressed a wish that Captain Shaver might be somethinged. Aloud he intimated that that made it very difficult, certainly.

"If you please, miss," remarked Cantanker, "there was likeways something which the gentleman observed with regard to the position which should be occupied by the bed of any one who was wishful to enjoy repose. Something about the pole—the curtain-pole, was it?"

"Oh yes, of course there was, Cantanker, but it wasn't the curtain-pole, it was the North Pole. Gilbert, Captain Shaver says that it is impossible to be in good health unless your bed lies along the line of the polar current, running north and south. And then he got out a little compass, and I showed him, by means of the sofa, how my bed was placed (for of course I was not going to admit him to my bedroom), and then he got himself in line with the sofa, and he consulted his compass, and then he cried out, turning quite pale as he spoke, 'Why, bless my heart, Miss Carrington, the article of furniture——' he was too delicate to call it a bed——"

"A terew gentleman," remarked Cantanker, sotto voce.

"'The article of furniture under discussion,' he said, 'lies in a direct line east and west. I wonder, Miss Carrington, that you are alive.' That's what he said. His very words, weren't they, Cantanker?"

"Yes, miss, he said he wondered you was alive."

"Now, Gilbert, what's to be done?" asked the lady, as if she believed that another night of it would kill her.

"I should think that nothing was easier than to turn the 'article of furniture,' as your friend calls it, round at a right angle, but I must remind you that these are matters out of my province."

"Ah," said Miss Carrington, coldly.

"If you'll explain what you want to me, I will try to set it right," said poor Gabrielle. "But I do wish," she added, with pardonable irritability, "that you would apply to me about such things, and not to my husband."

Madame Cantanker made a note of these words, fixing her eyes on Gabrielle with a deadly venom. Meanwhile, Miss Carrington remarked that "She really couldn't stop to consider every word, and to whom it ought to be addressed."

That night, when the young couple were alone, Gilbert cried out, in the bitterness of his spirit, "This cannot go on—that woman must be got rid of."

But they were hardly alone, for Jane Cantanker was listening at the door. She heard a good deal that night. She heard Mrs. Penmore say, "Oh, Gilbert, she is so spiteful, and she says such bitter things on purpose. She makes me feel so wicked, almost as if I could kill her sometimes," and she heard her burst out sobbing and crying. These things Madame Cantanker heard, but she did not hear—because she got tired of waiting—how, half an hour afterwards, Gabrielle said to her husband, "Oh, Gilbert, I didn't mean that I really was angry with her, and I wouldn't hurt a hair of head, and you know that, don't you? It's not much to bear, is it?"

It was one of Miss Carrington's peculiarities that she was extremely variable, and so different at different times, that, to use a familiar phrase, "there was no knowing where to have her."

She seemed of late to have taken a wonderful fancy for her cousin, taking every opportunity of showing her predilections too, and remaining quite unshaken by the numerous rebuffs and snubs with which, as we have seen, Gilbert was in the habit of receiving her remarks. For he really disliked the lady with a forty-cousin power, and probably her presence was almost more distressing to him than even to Gabrielle herself.

It may have been that this sudden regard that Miss Carrington began to manifest for her cousin was, to some extent, assumed and put on, in order to give annoyance, if possible, to Mrs. Penmore. Miss Carrington was, as has been said, good looking, and she was aware of it. She hated Gabrielle—though why, it would be difficult to say—and if it had been possible to inflict a pang in that direction, she would undoubtedly have been only too glad.

One day she produced a photograph of herself for which she had been sitting. It was a good likeness, but what the artist who took it had gone through, who shall describe? Of course the man knew something of what he was about, and, in arranging her attitude, had to consider the defects inherent in the instrument, and to bear in mind that any part of the sitter which came nearer to his lens than another, must needs be exaggerated to twice its real size in the picture. This is why we all have to submit to be pinioned into all sorts of ungraceful positions when we sit for such likenesses. This is why we are fain to be so very unassuming in the pose of our legs, and to keep our elbows well back, lest our hands should assume gigantic proportions, and ruin the natural refinement of our aspect. But Miss Carrington was not to be easily drilled into submission. She had views of her own on the subject of attitude. She had a fine hand; and determined to give prominence to this elegant extremity, she insisted on so placing it, that it came out in the photograph about the size of the wooden hand which dangles still over the fronts of some of our metropolitan glovers' shops. The photograph had of course to be cancelled, and so had another, in which the lady appeared with a pantomimic head, not to speak of another with a gigantic nose, and yet another, where the skirts of the dress claimed a monopoly of space, so that the head and body of Miss Carrington was only seen in the distance, and bore no proportion at all to her lower extremities. In short, it was a photograph of the lady's feet, and very large feet they seemed, too, which, to do her justice, was not the case in reality. At last, Miss Carrington was obliged to submit to professional knowledge, and the result was a very striking likeness of the lady in a somewhat constrained and unnatural attitude.

"There, Gilbert," said Miss Carrington, in a sentimental tone, and handing him one of the portraits. "There is something which I hope you will keep for old acquaintance' sake." She was always trying to hint that there had been some tender passages between them in former times, for which there was not the slightest foundation in fact, as indeed they had not met half a dozen times till now. Mrs. Penmore gave a little start as those words were spoken, but on Gilbert himself they were entirely lost.

"Ah, oh yes," he said. "Dear me, what a good likeness; who did it?"

Miss Carrington replied that it was the work of a dreadful wretch named Grouper, in the Tottenham-court-road.

"Well, at any rate it's a very good likeness, isn't it, Gabrielle?" and he handed the work of art across to her, adding, in entire good faith, "and you'd better take care of it, as I should be sure to lose it."

Mrs. Penmore was just beginning to corroborate her husband's opinion, when Miss Carrington suddenly started up from her place, and exclaiming, "Well, I think you might have pretended to care about it, at any rate," went away to her room.

She was closely followed by Jane Cantanker, who, however, turned a destructive glance in the direction of poor Gabrielle as she passed through the door.

"Is she mad?" inquired Gilbert of his wife, when both the ladies had disappeared.

"You never cared for her?" asked Gabrielle.

Her husband burst into a roar of laughter. "I should think not," he said. "Nor she for me; why, I've only seen her two or three times in my life."

"It's very extraordinary," said Gabrielle. "She's been so odd lately, sometimes violent and excited almost, and sometimes quite heavy and stupid, and refusing to come down stairs or let any one see her but her maid. I hope she is not going to be ill. She certainly gets more capricious every day."

CHAPTER VIII. CORNELIUS VAMPI AT HOME.

THERE were retained in the service of Mr. Cornelius Vampi, besides the youth who assisted in the herb shop, an old man and his wife. These looked after the house, did what was necessary in the way of cooking, and made the beds, functions which were performed by either one of them indifferently—as the case might be. Old Smaggsdale, or, as his master called him, "Smagg," could make a bed or cook a dinner at a pinch as well as his wife, and would sometimes have to turn his hand to such matters when his better-half was engaged in cleaning the house down from top to bottom, which she invariably did whenever she felt disposed to be low in her spirits. There was, however, one function which old Smagg had entirely to himself, and with which his good lady was in no wise disposed to interfere. The observatory up-stairs was entirely under the charge of the husband, and he it was to whom the privilege of assisting the great philosopher in his experiments was alone accorded.

The fact is, that Mrs. Smaggsdale, who, as her way of curing low spirits amply testifies, was a person of practical mind entirely dis-

believed in everything that went on in the laboratory. Could any good come of a room that was never dusted? Could anything done in such an apartment prosper? Could science which required to be prosecuted under such conditions be worth twopence? She had been forbidden to enter that room. Once, many years ago, impelled by a sort of frenzy of cleanliness, to attacks of which she was liable, she had entered the room and carefully dusted everything she could lay her hands upon, and had felt a lightness of spirit afterwards of an unparalleled kind, for she said to herself that now, for once, all the house was clean and sweet. Her hilarity, however, was not of long duration. The astrologer found out what had happened, and denounced her with imprecations of so unknown and incomprehensible a sort, as nearly frightened her to death. He called upon all the most vicious of the planets to set themselves against her. He handed her over to the Great Bear to be hugged, to the Little Bear to be torn and lacerated. He brought the signs of the zodiac to bear upon her. Scorpio and Leo were let loose for her benefit. The Crab was to nip her with his claws, and Taurus was to impale her on one of his horns. In short, such a combination of horrors were to accumulate upon her devoted head, that life itself would hardly be worth the having on such terms. What was left to the wretched woman after this but to depreciate the science which was so much against her? And she did so with all her might, and even tried to make a sceptic of her husband as well.

With regard to that good man, I am afraid that it must be stated that he was of a weak disposition. He temporised. In the laboratory, and under the influence of his master, he was a profound believer. In the kitchen, and with his wife's sarcasms ringing in his ears, he doubted. Smagg was a little, seedy, mouldy old man, with a crestfallen carriage, and a shuffling gait. His appearance was wonderfully like his character, and both were evasive, in consequence, no doubt, of this double part which he was always playing. To do him justice, I believe that he had not the least idea as to the state of his own mind in connexion with his master's pursuits, and that he was for the time perfectly sincere, whether in his belief or in his doubt.

In pursuance of that system of having all duties in common which prevailed throughout the arrangements of this worthy couple, it happened that Mrs. Smaggsdale was not unfrequently called upon, when there was a press of business, to serve behind the counter, where she was, indeed, extremely serviceable. Here, too, her husband would occasionally officiate, and on him would devolve the duty of communicating with the head of the establishment when that remarkable character was too much engaged with the stars to be able to attend to the shop. This seldom happened, however, except in the evening, a season when the philosopher thought he had a right to devote his time to his favourite pursuits.

It is with evening time that we have now to do. The evening of the day on which Mr. Julius Lethwaite came to the conclusion—as stated in a previous chapter—that he would go and have an interview with the astrologer.

"I was just occupied with your affairs," said that jolly individual, as Lethwaite entered his sanctum. "You have been a good deal in my thoughts lately."

"And I suppose you knew I was coming this evening?" remarked the cynic, with something of a sneer.

"You sent a premonitory current in this direction, which reached me about five minutes since," replied the philosopher, in perfect good faith. "I said to myself, 'He'll be here presently.'"

"What an impostor you are, Vampi!"

"Ah, sir, you know better than that," replied Cornelius, not in the least disconcerted. "But, as I was saying, I've been occupying myself with your affairs lately, and that made me, perhaps, particularly accessible to any influence of an atmospheric kind coming from you."

"And may I ask why I've been so fortunate as to occupy your attention lately?"

"Well, sir, to tell you the honest truth, your affairs are not looking so well as I could wish, and that's why I've been trying hard to pry into them a bit." The philosopher turned over a good many bits of paper with all sorts of hieroglyphics, and queer figures, and mystic words upon them, and scratched his head with the blunt end of a pair of compasses in much perplexity. "From the time when you first confided to me the particulars from which I was able to construct your horoscope," continued the astrologer, "I've been able to put you up to more than one coming event, now, haven't I?"

"Well, you've made one or two good guesses, certainly," replied the other, in a provoking manner.

"Ah, you may call them guesses, but I know better than that, and so do you." The philosopher was used to his client's sceptical way of talking, it being Lethwaite's habit always to act as if he believed in Vampi, but to talk as if he did not. The astrologer himself did not really much care; he believed in himself, and that was enough.

"Guesses!" he continued. "Ah, you little know the certainty of Science and the extent of her revelations. It is with us that the uncertainty lies, and the difficulty. The truth is all there," he said, pointing to the starlit sky, "if we poor mortals could but read it. But we gaze with dazzled eyes, and read with faltering vision, and hence it is that we are liable to mistakes. If I could venture—which I dare not—to trust my mental vision altogether, I could tell of things yet to come of which we see no hint even, in the events which are going on around us."

"And where do you see all these things?" asked the disciple, for such he appeared to be at the moment.

"There," replied the adept, pointing again to

the heavens. "The nations have their horoscopes as the individuals have of whom the nations are made up. There are signs in the sky which those who study long and reverently can read, warnings that threaten, combinations which, indicating the fusing together of bodies which may not peacefully amalgamate, must surely end in discord. These, and the like of these, we can see, though, as I have said, with dazzled eyes, and the meaning of these we can partly make out, but with hesitating and doubtful perception only."

There was a pause here of some duration, and Vampi occupied himself again with his cabalistic papers.

"And do you really believe in these things, Cornelius?" asked Lethwaite, whose cynicism seemed for a time to have deserted him, "or are you only making a pastime of things that sound too serious for play?"

"Pastime! Play!" echoed Vampi. "How can you even use such words. Why, my life is given up to the study of these things. This, far more than the trade which I am obliged to follow, is the real business of my existence. And my reward is great. Detached from the things of this world, alone in this garret, with nothing but the air between me and the heavenly bodies which it is my delight to watch, I have as little to do with the bustle and noise of this great town—am as utterly alone in it and as little affected by it, as a solitary in the desert. And so, *like* a solitary, I see strange visions here, and sometimes with the aid of this glorious invention," and he laid his hand upon the telescope as he spoke with something of affection, "I seem to be on the point of making such discoveries as one day shall make my name immortal. Nay, my very sleep is less a sleep than a transition into another and more spiritual world, where I mingle with the shades of those whose written thoughts have been my guiding study in my waking hours, the shades of Aristotle, of Newton, and of Herschel, of Albertus Magnus, and my namesake, Cornelius Agrippa."

"And what do these tell you—what do they bid you do?" asked Lethwaite.

"They bid me go on, and by no means to be discouraged. In a society entirely occupied with facts they bid me deal with what the world calls fancies, and study still to bring to perfection those neglected arts by which it is possible to foretel the future, to warn men of coming misfortunes, or congratulate them on the approach of a prosperity of which they can as yet know nothing."

"And it is a prediction belonging to the first of these sections which affects me just now?" asked Lethwaite.

"It is so," replied the adept. "There is some risk to be apprehended in your case. There are adverse influences at work, and which will be at work for some little time to come, by which your undertakings will run the risk of being fatally opposed. You were born under Saturn, and there are some even more powerful than he whose machinations are just now much to be dreaded. Therefore, I say, be wary."

"Then what would you advise, Cornelius?"

"I would advise you to practise the greatest caution," replied the sage. "I would advise you for some time to come to engage in no enterprise or transaction of unusual importance, and to regard every proposal that may be made to you with the greatest suspicion; to walk, in fact, with an especial caution, and as one does who knows himself to be surrounded with pitfals. I suppose," he continued, after a pause, "that you have no reason yourself, and from anything you know, to apprehend any risk?"

"Of what kind? Do you mean of a personal kind?" asked Lethwaite.

"No, as far as I have been able to make out, it is not a personal risk that you have to apprehend. There is no single indication of anything of the sort."

Julius Lethwaite turned over what the astrologer had said in his mind for some time. It had made more impression upon him than he could account for. He generally played with life as if it were some instrument of music, and that with so light a touch that the full sound was never got out of the deeper and more solemn chords. He was not much used to being in earnest. Trouble and he had had but little to say to each other.

Suddenly he thought of that visit from old Goodrich. He remembered that the old man had seemed to be very much in earnest, and that he appeared to speak as if there was some special risk at hand. He had hinted that his master's partner, Mr. Gamlin, had been speculating in an injudicious manner, and that considering the state of things in America—the reader is reminded that we are speaking of a time when the American war was impending—that considering what thoughtful men were saying in the City, Mr. Gamlin was much too fond of dealings with the then United States of America. These were disturbing thoughts, or rather they would have proved so to any one who had harboured them. But they were unwelcome guests in the mind of Julius Lethwaite. His motto was "Sans souci," and in a very few minutes after these unpleasant reflections had passed before him, he had managed to become his old self again, and was ready for all sorts of unprofitable speculations about the corruptness of humanity, or indeed anything else that did not concern his prospects.

He had got rid of every uneasy feeling, and was preparing to probe the astrologer with more questions, when he was interrupted by an undecided sort of tap at the door.

"Come in," shouted the philosopher, who recognised the sound. "Come in, Smagg."

The little man obeyed, and closing the door after him as he entered, shuffled up close to his master's chair, and made the following announcement:

"Here's the lady, master."

"And does she decline to do business with you?"

"Declines to do business with any one but yourself."

"Oh, very well, then you may tell her that I'm coming down directly."

"Upon my word," remarked Mr. Lethwaite, as the door closed, "I think that's pretty well for a philosopher. Mysterious ladies coming here, and insisting on seeing Mr. Vampi, and quite sure that nobody else will do."

The philosopher smiled. "Ah, it's all innocent enough, poor thing," he said.

They descended the stairs together, and Lethwaite passed out at the private door, Cornelius impressing upon him once more as he did so the necessity of caution.

As Mr. Lethwaite passed the door of the herbalist's shop on his way home, he saw the figure of a lady standing by the counter. But she was muffled up in a shawl, and closely veiled, and her back was turned towards him.

CHAPTER IX. NOT TO BE PUT DOWN.

It was one of Mr Lethwaite's great objects in life to find some means of pushing his friend Gilbert, and winning for him the chance, at any rate, of distinguishing himself. Our cynic had some acquaintances among solicitors, and might, no doubt, if he had chosen, have got for himself some experimental briefs from these gentlemen, who, like a large portion of their fellow-creatures, are ever ready to help those who are not in need of assistance. To secure their good offices for a friend who *was* in need of assistance, was not so easy. And here, it may be remarked, was a case in which the discovery of a corrupt instigating motive would have been sufficiently difficult, if Mr. Lethwaite had set himself the task of finding one out. Of course, he would have said that he had been actuated by that love of patronising which is inherent in the human breast, but few of his friends would have been found ready to endorse such an opinion.

It was, then, with a view of giving his friend a chance, that on a certain day about this time, our analytical friend thought that he would invite some of his legal acquaintances to pass the evening, and that he would ask Gilbert Penmore to meet them. And this was something of a piece of self-denial in itself, for these same lawyers were by no means the companions whom he would naturally have chosen, unless he had some special object in view. Be that as it may, the thing was decided on, and the young gentleman who held the nearest approach to a sinecure which is to be had in these severe times—or in other words, Mr. Lethwaite's clerk—was despatched in search, first of Mr. Jeffrey, of Searle-street, and then of Mr. Gregg, of New-square, and then of Mr. Craft, of Lincoln's Inn-fields, and finally of Mr. Phipps, of Furnival's. All these gentlemen were luckily disengaged, with the exception of Mr. Gregg, who was busy preparing the defence of a gentleman who had distinguished himself by an extraordinary power of imitating the handwritings of capitalists, and affixing the same to divers cheques drawn in his own favour.

This case was making quite a sensation in the profession, and the legal gentlemen assembled at Mr. Lethwaite's chambers were full of it.

"It's the cleverest thing you ever saw in your life," said Mr. Craft, as if he were talking of a work of art, and chuckling as he spoke. He was a little cheerful man, whom, to look at, or knowing him only slightly, you would have thought so good natured that he could be brought to do anything; but touch him on a matter of business, and you would find that, still with the most jovial manner, he could watch his own interest as well as another. "Here's one of the cheques, look!"

The other two attorneys pressed eagerly forward to look. The writing was in so remarkable a hand that every one felt that it *must* be like. Of these other two legal gentlemen, by-the-by, Mr. Phipps was of a smooth and somewhat evasive character, and Mr. Jeffrey was almost entirely speechless, and, having an asthma, wheezed instead of talked. It was much less compromising, he found.

"It's a most remarkable circumstance," remarked the smiling Mr. Phipps, "the proclivity of some natures towards evil. Now, if this misguided individual had bestowed half the labour and thought which he has devoted to the prosecution of illegitimate studies, on perfecting himself in some useful art, he might have been a valuable member of society, and would never have found himself in his present painful predicament." Mr. Phipps always spoke in this elaborate manner, and in an unctuous voice. In his own opinion, he had made a mistake in early life in not having adopted the bar as his profession—wouldn't he have touched the juries up, he thought to himself, with eloquent phraseology and flowing periods. However, it was too late to think of that now, so there was nothing for it but to bring his phrases to bear upon the exigencies of private life.

"I suppose the counsel on both sides are retained already?" remarked Gilbert, ever on the look-out.

"Ah, I believe you," chuckled the hilarious but somewhat vulgar Mr. Craft. "First-rate hands, every one of them, I can tell you."

"I hope he'll get off," remarked Lethwaite, languidly, between two puffs of cigar-smoke.

"*Hope* he will!" cried Messrs. Craft and Phipps, while the other attorney uttered a wheeze of astonishment.

"Yes I do," retorted the cynic. "There are always a certain number of people in a great society who can't stand the routine of ordinary business life, and who require adventure and excitement to keep them going. This was probably one of them. Besides, he only practised on the purses of commercial people, and you know, as well as I do, that they are all cheats, quite as bad as himself——"

"Come, I say," interrupted Mr. Craft, "that won't quite do; why, you are in the commercial line yourself, ain't you?"

"And I was just going to say, when you stopped me, that we cheat so at our place that

I was obliged to give up going to the office, lest my conscience should prevent me from sharing the profits of the concern."

"You will permit me to remark, Mr. Lethwaite," put in the elaborate Phipps, "that in the days of special pleading you would have attained to the greatest distinction, had your career led you into the intricate mazes belonging to that defunct institution."

"By-the-by," broke in the impetuous Craft, addressing his host, "if you've got such a strong feeling for clever rogues——"

"I have," interrupted the cynic.

"Well, then, you'll be interested in a case which is beginning to make no end of a sensation in West-end circles, and which I believe is looking my way for the defence."

"Ah," ejaculated Lethwaite, becoming interested at once as he thought of his friend. "Let's hear about it."

Poor Gilbert pricked up his ears also. Was there a chance?

"I'm disposed to imagine," remarked the smiling Phipps, "that I have likewise heard something of the case to which you refer. Is it not that of Godfrey de St. Aubyn, as he calls himself?"

"The same," replied Craft, "and a precious deep customer, I can tell you, as you shall hear. Well, he's another of the gentlemen who 'can't stand the routine of ordinary business' that you were speaking of just now, Mr. Lethwaite. He came over to this country with some good introductions, which are now thought to have been forged, and having very insinuating manners, and a pleasant way with him, he gets on by degrees in English society, and in time gets to have a lot of acquaintances among all sorts of smart people, and more especially among such as he had reason to know were well represented at their bankers. All this, no doubt, took time, and he had to live as well as he could upon a little money which he had, the result probably of some swindling transaction, and upon the credit which the tradespeople, seeing him always among rich people, were ready to give him. Besides, he had the intention of making a fortune at one stroke, and he looked forward to that.

"Well, gentlemen, being a good-looking fellow, with plenty of impudence, and the gift of the gab very strongly developed, and, moreover, having a fine voice for singing, he really made a great many friends, and got to be much liked, so that when he announced one fine day that he had received letters requiring his return to France immediately, everybody who knew him was in despair, and his parting request, that his kind friends would favour him with their photographs, was promptly complied with.

"But that was not enough for this affectionate gentleman," Mr. Craft went on. "As soon as he had got the photographs he discovered that there was still something wanting, and that he should never know a moment's happiness unless the autograph of each of the originals was written underneath his or her portrait. So he invites them all, or all he could get of them, to come on a certain day to take luncheon with him, as a sort of farewell meeting, when they could give him their autographs. Now, four of his guests were men of great wealth, and this Godfrey de St. Aubyn had made it his business to find out where they banked in the course of some of the familiar conversations in which he'd been engaged with them before this time; then he'd got his information all ready, and by the day of the luncheon had made all his preparations.

"'And now, dear ladies and gentlemen,' he said, as soon as the meal was over, 'I will speak of that which is next my heart, and I will ask you to give me those precious autographs which will make my portraits so much more precious, and on which I shall gaze with delight when I am far far away.' And with that he leads the way to a table in rather a dark corner of the room, where were pens and ink all ready, and a book of photographs lying waiting for their signatures. A beautifully neat book it was too, and under each of the likenesses there was a little piece of the pasteboard cut away, and a different kind of paper appeared underneath ready for the name that was to be written there. St. Aubyn explained that it had been necessary to prepare the book in this way, as the pasteboard on which the photographs were stuck was absorbent, like blotting-paper. He convinced them of this by making a mark at the side of the leaf, and showing them how the ink would run out of all form.

"Well, they all signed their names in the little openings left for them, and then away they went, wishing the young man good-bye, and hoping they would soon see him again, and all the rest of it. Directly their backs were turned, up jumps mossu, and gets to work at his photograph book."

"Ah, I see," cried Gilbert, quickly. "He had let in slips of paper at the back, and having got the signature of each of these capitalists exactly in its right place, he had nothing to do but to draw out the papers and turn them into cheques."

"What an ingenious fellow to be sure," remarked Lethwaite.

"He sat up all night at work," continued the attorney. "By means of the signature at the foot of each slip of paper, and with the help of certain notes and letters which he had contrived at different times to get from his friends, he was able to forge cheques to various large amounts —£1000, or £500, or any sum that seemed to him a safe one, till he had made up a gross amount of not less than £5000. Then, as soon as the banks were open in the morning, there he was at the counter, receiving packets of notes and shovelsful of gold with the calmest air imaginable.

"What an extraordinary fellow," remarked Lethwaite again

"Yes, but the 'extraordinary fellow' made a mistake at last. There was one signature which he had obtained from a very rich gentleman, with whom he had had no previous correspondence of any kind, who had a very short name,

which of course I can't mention, but I may say that there were no more letters in his signature than there would have been in that of Paul Pry; so naturally our friend was very much puzzled, and found it very difficult to form the theory of a handwriting with so little foundation to go upon. He succeeded, however, tolerably to his own satisfaction; more so, indeed, than to that of the cashier to whom he handed it for payment. This gentleman bestowed one searching glance upon the draft and another upon the individual who presented it. This last was conscious that his severest test had now come, and may, perhaps, have worn something of an evasive air.

"'Have the kindness to take a seat for one moment,' said the cashier, very politely, and retiring with the cheque in his hand towards a door leading to one of the inner offices. As he got to the door, however, he paused for an instant, doubting whether he wouldn't pay the draft at once, and not bother the partners about it, when, looking back to where he had left our gentleman, he sees him very quietly sneaking out of the office. That was enough; off goes the cashier in pursuit, calls to the policeman who was always at the door, gives St. Aubyn in charge, and there's an end of it."

"But what was it that had aroused the suspicions of the cashier?" inquired Mr. Phipps.

"Well, he doubted about the handwriting. The look of the cheque was very different from any he had previously seen coming from the same quarter, and the sum demanded was so large that he thought it best not to act upon his own responsibility."

"Suspicious beast!" muttered the cynic; "not half so clever as the other chap."

"And you have to get up this man's defence?" inquired Penmore, with considerable eagerness,

"Yes, sir," replied the attorney, a little coldly, "it's coming my way."

"Now I'll tell you what, Craft," said Lethwaite, sitting up in his chair, and thoroughly in earnest, "you must give our friend Penmore here a chance as junior."

"Ah, sir," returned the other, quite a different man now from the genial story-teller of a few minutes since, "I couldn't do it."

"Well, but why couldn't you do it?"

"Why, to begin with, Mr. Lethwaite, you see the case is, between friends, not a good one, and every one engaged by me *must be* a person of tried ability and considerable experience."

"How is a man to get experience," pleaded Gilbert, taking up his own cause, "unless somebody will trust him to begin with?"

"Yes, that's very true, sir," replied the other, "but this is not the sort of case to begin with. The slightest oversight, the least omission to push an advantage, would be fatal."

"Ticklish defence, I should say, very ticklish," wheezed Jeffrey the silent.

"Well, I think this is an unfriendly act on your part, Craft," said Lethwaite, speaking quite in earnest.

"Now, don't you be hard upon me, Mr. Lethwaite," replied the attorney. "I've got my clients to satisfy, remember, in the choice of the barristers who are to represent their interests, and they like well-known names."

"Don't press it, Lethwaite," said Gilbert, rather drearily. "Mr. Craft would rather not try the experiment, evidently."

"Yes, but I *do* press it, and I think it's very unfriendly."

"Well, then, look here, Mr. Lethwaite," Mr. Craft broke out, desperately; "if you must know, there's another reason."

"And what's that?"

The attorney hesitated a little, and then he blurted it out all the more roughly that he was shy of what he had to say.

"Why, the fact is, sir, that your friend speaks with a foreign accent, as you must have observed, and that would go very much against him in an English court of justice."

Few things could have been more awkward than an announcement such as this. It was awkwardly said too, and an unpleasant silence followed the attorney's speech. As for Penmore himself, he had been prepared for it; it was not the first allusion that had been made to that disaster, which was the result of his bringing-up. His friend Lethwaite felt it almost worse than Gilbert did. He was a great partisan.

"I never heard such nonsense in my life," he said. "Mr. Penmore is an Englishman by birth, has an English name, and speaks the language as well as I do. The whole question is about a trifling accent, a matter of pronunciation, which will improve every day. I dare say he knows the grammar of the language better than you do, Mr. Craft, and I'm sure he knows it better than *I* do."

"Very likely," retorted Craft, "but that's not the question. The grammar ain't much, as we see every day in letters to the newspapers, and in Queen's speeches, and the like. Juries don't mind a few faults in grammar, but a foreign accent would set them against a man, and against his argument, directly."

"Nonsense," retorted the partisan. "What do *you* say, Mr. Phipps?"

"I am afraid," replied that polite gentleman, "that it will be indispensably necessary for me to give it against you. In England there is a most powerful conviction in the public mind that foreigners are, as a race—shall I say bamboozlers? I really am unable to think of a better word at the moment—bamboozlers. And if they were to hear your friend speaking with a foreign accent, they would not pause to consider whether he might or might not be of English extraction and birth, but would say at once, 'Now we are going to be bamboozled.'"

"The fact is, again," continued Mr. Craft, "that a court of justice is a very queer concern. Once now, for instance, give them a chance of *laughing*——"

"Of laughing?" cried Lethwaite.

"Of laughing?" echoed Gilbert, savagely.

"Yes, gentlemen, I'm obliged to say it. They

might take it into their heads to laugh—and then where are you?"

Mr. Jeffrey was understood to wheeze forth the announcement that "they'd laugh if you so much as held up one of your fingers to them."

"Now I'll tell you what," said Mr. Craft, as he filled himself a fresh glass of brandy-and-water, and kindled a fresh cigar. "Suppose, in order that we may form a candid opinion, and a fair one, that your friend Mr. Penmore was to give us a specimen of his speaking. We've only heard him in the course of conversation, you know, as yet, and if he was to make a regular set speech, it might be different. Here, you've got a lot of law-books here, Mr. Lethwaite—not that you make much use of them, I suspect—and there are speeches of Lord Brougham's and Lord Campbell's, and lots of other law swells. Suppose, now, that Mr. Penmore was to take one of these and recite it to us; or maybe he has something of the sort by heart, something he may have learnt to build his style upon; let him give us a speech of that sort, and we might, perhaps, form a more favourable judgment."

"Oh, you can't expect a man to do a thing of the sort in cold blood," said Lethwaite, with rather an anxious look towards his friend notwithstanding.

Gilbert was silent. Such a proceeding as that suggested by Mr. Craft was peculiarly repugnant to him. To attempt such a thing in cold blood, as his friend had said, was terrible. How could he do himself justice? Was it not sure to be a failure? But then he thought of Gabrielle, of the comforts she stood in need of, of the privations she had to put up with. He thought of his own ambition to excel in the law, and of all he had already sacrificed to that desire. And then he determined that he would endure yet this annoyance also, and do the thing that was required of him.

He turned over the leaves of one of his friend's books, containing various reports of trials, till he came to one containing a speech of Lord Stowel's, which it happened that he knew to a great extent by heart. And in this, after pausing a little while, as a bather delays before descending into the cold water, he fairly embarked, while the attorneys, prepared to criticise, were encamped over against him in formidable array.

The speech was one of those in which great eloquence and the soundest logic and the most astute reasoning were combined together. In short, it was a model of what such an address ought to be, and, truth to say, it was really done justice to by Gilbert Penmore, in spite of his accent. A more enlightened set of judges than our three solicitors must have perceived this, but to them the peculiar pronunciation of some of the words was the only thing worthy of note, and even when the address, as it advanced increased in strength of language and eloquence, when men of a less matter-of-fact sort would have been carried away by the earnestness and intelligence with which the speaker made his points—even then it was of the accent with which the words were uttered that the lawyers thought, far more than of the meaning which those words conveyed, and the power with which that meaning was enforced.

It may have been that Gilbert felt the critical attitude of his audience, and saw that he had to fight against a hopeless amount of prejudice. For a time he contended against this feeling, and indeed throughout he never gave in to it, but it annoyed him, and made him nervous nevertheless, and that caused him to make one or two mistakes, at every one of which he could see his auditors exchange glances, manifesting at the same time a strong desire to laugh, probably only kept in check by the imperturbable gravity of their host, who saw that his friend was beginning to get into difficulties, and did all he could to give him nerve and courage.

Gilbert went through to the end, sustained by the determination with which he had started, but he felt that he had not succeeded in winning the favourable opinion of his auditors, and when he had got to the end of the speech, he said so in so many words.

"Now, look you here, Mr. Penmore," said Craft. "You take the advice of a man who's been engaged in the practice of the law for something like twenty years, and you turn your attention to some other branch of the profession than that which you're now aiming at. As a conveyancer or a chamber counsel there's a vast deal of money to be made; your law studies would not be thrown away, and any defects of speech, such as we've been talking about, would not be of so much consequence. But as to your going into court in the capacity of advocate, as you seem bent on doing, take my word for it, it won't act, and the sooner you give up the idea the better for you."

"And is that your opinion, Mr. Phipps?" asked Gilbert.

"Well, sir, I am constrained to admit that it is," replied that gentleman.

"And yours, sir," continued the young barrister, addressing Mr. Jeffrey.

Mr. Jeffrey wheezed assent.

"Well then, gentlemen," said Gilbert, nothing daunted, "I have only to say that I'm very much obliged to you for your advice, and for the patience with which you have heard me, and for the restraint you have put upon yourselves when you have felt inclined to laugh at me; but as to my giving up the object which I have kept before me for so many years—as to my pursuing some other branch of the profession than that to which I am at present devoted—nothing shall induce me to think of so acting till I have had the opportunity, once at any rate, of pleading in open court, and bringing this question which you have settled so quickly against me among yourselves, to the test of what may, to some extent, be called public opinion."

"Bravo!" cried Mr. Lethwaite. "Well said. You shall prove them all wrong yet."

"Very good, gentlemen—very good," retorted Craft, with a grin. "All I can say is, that—we shall see."

"Yes, gentlemen," cried Gilbert, stoutly, "we *shall* see. And may the time of trial not be far off."

But, for all his brave words, the poor fellow went away that evening with a heavy heart.

ALL THE WORLD AKIN.

THERE is a French word, "solidarité," which, on account of its meaning and its usefulness, might be naturalised into English without raising much objection or opposition. It indicates the connexion, the oneness, the intimate union, the non-isolation implied by one member of society being bound for, and affected by, the welfare of the whole. The fact that all mankind are akin and are nothing but an innumerable brotherhood inhabiting one vast many-roomed tenement, has become apparent from recent discussions respecting the cholera, of which M. Victor Borie has given a summary in the Siècle.

For the last thirty years, people have been asking, What is cholera? Whence comes it? How can its return be prevented? What is the best defence against its attacks? When occurring, how can they be cured?

We may fairly pass with slight consideration any hypothetical, dreamy, or superstitious notions respecting its final causes. We cannot believe it to be the hand of Providence punishing us for our evil deeds. Because Providence is just; and so many honest folk have died of the cholera, and so many rogues have escaped or survived it, that *that* pious supposition must be discarded. Nor can we believe the cholera to be a natural means of keeping down a superabundant population. Men have been foolish enough to say, "We want a good war; we shall soon not know where to stow ourselves; Europe is too thickly inhabited." But there is NO good war. War is one of the most senseless acts which our infant humanity commits. Moreover, there are not too many inhabitants, neither in the United Kingdom, nor in France, nor in Europe, nor elsewhere. We cultivate only one-tenth part of the habitable globe, and we set-to to cut each other's throats instead of cultivating the remainder. Truly, mankind is an intelligent race!

It is poverty, and the weakness which it engenders; it is debauchery and selfishness, which undertake the task of limiting the population. There is no need for either war or the cholera to give them a helping hand. War is quite a thing of human invention; and "the God of Battles," if not a scrap of heathen mythology, is certainly an abominable and absurd piece of blasphemy. It is now held that the cholera is an evil due to the same initiation; that the cholera, like the plague, is the consequence of human stupidity and folly; that, although we cannot exactly say what the cholera is, at least we know whence it comes. And, when once we know the cause, can we not avert its consequences by the effectual suppression of that cause?

The cholera is hatched in, and takes its flight from, the great delta of the Ganges, which throws itself into the Bay of Bengal through seventeen principal mouths, and by an infinity of smaller secondary channels. The mud, suspended in the stream of the Ganges, precipitated by mixture with the salt waters of the ocean, forms along the coast shifting bars and banks and pestilential marshes. The population of those districts is very dense. The Hindoos do not bury their dead; they confide them, on a bed of leaves, to the stream of the Ganges, who is commissioned to conduct them to "the celestial domains." Wretches at the point of death are sent adrift in similar style, in order that no time may be lost.

The bodies are cast ashore at the mouth of the river, in the midst of vegetable rubbish of every kind, and the remains of animals heaped together by the carnivores who abound in that country. The mud of the river, acting like paint or plaster, partially preserves the corpses of men and animals from the dissolving influences of the water, and converts them into a sort of glutinous organic soap. Then comes the dry season, says Dr. Selim Ernest Maurin, in the interesting essay which he has published at Marseilles, Prophylaxie du Cholera. The marshes, exposed to the heat of a tropical sun, soon yield to evaporation all the water at their surface. But the heat incessantly draws upon the moisture; the mud is laid bare, and in turn gives up all the liquid which it has to yield. It then splits and cracks in all directions, and the earth pours forth mephitical effluvia, of whose offensiveness those who have smelt the cadaverous odours issuing from a vault can form but a faint idea.

Is it a fact that the yellow fever is attributed to the miasms produced by the marshes of the Antilles? Is it a fact that Parisot has demonstrated that the plague is caused by the effluvia exhaled from the Egyptian cemeteries when sodden and soaked by the waters of the Nile? Why, then, should not Dr. Maurin and his colleagues be right in declaring that the delta of the Ganges contains the fountain-head of choleric invasions? Cholera exists in permanence throughout all Bengal, but in the endemic state. At certain epochs, whether in consequence of a disease amongst cattle, or in consequence of the excessive heats, it becomes epidemic. The river is laden with masses of corpses on the way to their heavenly abode, as the idiotic natives stupidly believe, and the delta again reaches its maximum of infection.

Then the poisonous effluvia carried away by the grand atmospheric currents, whose existence is proved by the marvellous investigations of Commandant Maury and Lieutenant Julien, and which travel from the equator to the pole and from the pole to the equator—are spread over the greater portion of the earth's surface. Maury speaks, and that without exaggeration, of tallying the air, and putting labels on the wind, to "tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth;" by means of cholera, the breezes which reach us from the delta of the Ganges are

labelled Poison. The high road followed by the epidemic is indicated by the currents. The movement of translation towards the pole, performed by the hot air expanded in the tropics, is accomplished in a north-westerly direction. Hence we see the cholera successively attacking Arabia, Egypt, Persia, Turkey, and the Russian Empire. The atmospheric current, towards the close of its course, experiences a check which lasts two or three months. A deviation then takes places towards the west, namely, in the direction of Denmark, Prussia, and Great Britain. Then the atmospheric column returns towards the south, and France, Spain, Tunis, and Algeria, are attacked by the disease. Ever since 1817 the cholera has invariably followed this route.

The cholera, thus pouncing down upon its victims from the upper regions of the atmosphere, explains sporadic or dispersed cases which appear here and there without apparent reason, quite unconnected with other cases, and in localities reputed healthy. An unseen whirlwind, a restricted boiling up and down of the atmosphere, a hole drilled in a stratum of air by sudden heats or electrical action, may allow the descent of sufficient mephitic atoms to introduce cholera where it is least expected. This circumstance alone suffices to demonstrate the folly of running away. The fugitive is just as likely to exchange the frying-pan for the fire, or to quit security for danger, as to escape effectually from an evil which is only apprehended.

With reference to this, a sensible letter in the Times urges that the most powerful predisposing occasion, if not cause, of an attack during the epidemic, is fear. It seems to depress the whole physical system, and to place it at the mercy of the dominant plague. It does not create the disease, but it lays the sufferer open to the entrance and action of its poison. Its earliest victims are the terror-stricken. We are gregarious creatures. One acts upon another, and feeling is contagious. Each soldier in a regiment derives stimulus to his courage or his fears from his comrades. An intrepid and self-possessed officer is as good as a battalion. Whatever, therefore, sustains the hearts of the people during the visitation of an epidemic is of greater value than physic. Every man of rank, clergyman, physician, and every chief of department should, therefore, be at his post when the epidemic strikes. Immunity does not lie in flight. This is a very practical fact. Be it that the fugitives carry in them, or with them, the seeds of disease, or are predisposed by being depressed by fear, or otherwise affected, cannot be affirmed; but that many runaways fall victims to cholera, is fact. Perhaps they that remain become inured, are, so to speak, vaccinated, and gain the day. Whatever be the solution, this is certain, the post of duty is the post of safety.

In the beginning of last August the disease made its first appearance in Ancona, and it immediately spread widely and rapidly, in consequence of the imprudence of persons who ought to have known better. Several most indiscreet medical men raised the fears of the population to panic-pitch by trumpeting as loudly as they could the news of the malady's arrival. Out of a population, reduced by emigration to fifteen thousand in the town itself, and ten thousand in the environs, the deaths in the course of the first ten days amounted to more than fifteen hundred. The mortality, there can be little doubt, was occasioned quite as much by fright as by cholera. The syndic, or mayor, Count Fazioli, set the example of devotedness, in which he was seconded by his secretary, a stout-hearted young Piedmontese; but, of the other municipal functionaries, Assessor Marinelli was the only one who did not quit his post, bearing the burden which ought to have been shared by others. Nor did the fugitives gain much by their cowardice. At Loretto, Sinigaglia, and Civita Nuova, indeed, they were received with brotherly hospitality; but in other neighbouring towns they were very coldly looked upon, while elsewhere indifference was carried to the point of cruelty. At Porto Recanati, the captain of the National Guard headed those who pursued the fugitives. Several other towns distinguished themselves in this crusade against the unwelcome immigrants. At Monte Santa the municipality ordered domiciliary visits, to discover and expel the Anconitans who had taken refuge in certain houses; at Ertona and Gullanara their entrance was repulsed by gentle pressure with the bayonet and the revolver.

And now for the solidarity of Europe and Hindostan. We believe that we know where cholera comes from. How can we prevent its return? Bengal is the most fertile country in the world. The mud of the Ganges, the source of terrible epidemics, may serve still further to increase its fertility. Instead of spending hundreds of thousands of pounds, and sacrificing thousands of men in useless and ruinous expeditions, why should not Europe form a coalition against the scourge which periodically decimates it, and, by canalising the delta of the Ganges, render it cultivable, and, by means of the consequent drainage, healthy, or, at least, no longer a focus of pestilential emanations?

Have we already so much rice, tobacco, indigo, cotton, and sugar in the world that more is utterly superfluous, even if raised within easy reach of water-carriage? By the opening of the Isthmus of Suez, Bengal will soon be in direct communication with Europe. The centre of infection might be made to become an inexhaustible source of wealth, whereas it is at present an implacable instrument of death. The tribute paid to King Cholera, since 1817, amounts to forty-seven millions of corpses! Admitting that a man's life is of the same money-value as that of an ox, namely, some twenty pounds, or thereabouts, the total loss amounts to not much less than one hundred millions of pounds.

As to prophylactic measures: melons, peaches, and other especially-laxative fruits, should be abstained from, as well as excessively cold or

iced beverages, during the heat of the day. Symptoms of diarrhœa should at once be attended to. As to those who abuse strong liquors, or carry dram-drinking to excess, their fate is certain. One essayist on the cholera of 1832 has written: "The drunkard is condemned to death by cholera." In short, cleanliness, with temperance and sobriety in all things, are the most efficacious preservatives against this terrible affection.

As to curative means, doctors differ. A grand point is, for the patient to have faith in his doctor. The premonitory diarrhœa of cholera is almost always curable by remedies quite within the doctor's reach; it should, therefore, never be neglected during the continuance of the epidemic. To place the patient immediately in a warm bed, says Dr. Maurin, to keep up by gentle, dry friction the action of the skin, and to provoke a general perspiration, will be so much assistance rendered to the medical man during the incubation of the disease; but non-medical attendants should attempt no more. To do more, without calling in professional advice, would be great imprudence. In fact, the adoption of a decisive course of treatment requires a knowledge which cannot be communicated in general terms; there must be a practical tact and perception which the acutest intellects can only acquire by long clinical experience.

We may also permit ourselves to indulge in the hope that the nations of Europe, on sober reflection, and convinced of the world's solidarity, will cut off the evil at its root by cultivating an extraordinarily fertile region, which would give us in return both health and wealth. Must we wait another thousand years before such an incendiary proposition can be entertained?

NEW MOVE IN THE LIFFEY THEATRE.

Seeing that there is a temple to love, and brotherhood and peace in, full work in Ireland, and doing a good peace and brotherhood business, it is gratifying to me to find the Royal Liffey Theatre sharing in the general prosperity of the hour. It is, so to speak, in full swing; that is, if there ever was swing in lavish pink and yellow posters, and plenty of flaring fiery-looking gas, and an eager crowd about the yellow door at the end of the lane, and a bouquet of its own, not yet "extracted" by Messrs. Piesse and Lubin. There is such a theatrically thriving air about the whole, that I cannot resist, and, wishing to contribute my little mite to peace and brotherhood, enter by the yellow door.

And yet, when I think that not so long ago the Royal Liffey Theatre was a sort of howling wilderness, where bats, and things more unpleasant than bats, might have their carnival; that it was given over to slow decay and desolation; that no happier personification of mildew and dry rot could be conceived—the present transformation seemed almost bewildering. The oldest theatre certainly in the kingdom—for here, in the year 1741, Handel tinkled the Messiah at his harpsichord, and Signora Avoglio sang "I know that my Redeemer liveth," and Mr. Dubourg, the state composer, led off the fiddles. It must have tumbled into sure ruin, gradually mouldered into a nuisance, and have been taken down and cut out of the street, like a gangrene, to prevent its corrupting the houses about it, unless — unless my friend Mr. Malachy had stepped forward, secured a lease on easy terms, and opened to peace and brotherhood at "one shilling private boxes, with access to the stage," and prices judiciously graduated to a penny.

Mr. Malachy had taken deep thought, and, like an inspiration, it had entered into his brain to produce the piece I was now looking at; that drama—like Pope's Kitty, "ever fair and young," the Vicar of Wakefield of the stage—The Colleen Bawn!—on a grand new principle.

Seated in my private box—which is so far from being private, that there are three other persons occupying it—I find that we are well on in the fortunes of the ill-fated Eily. I look round the house, and find it crammed to the ceiling. I make out the old rococo shape, the remains of fossilised pilasters, and mouldering bits of florid stucco, which is so far good, for it helps me back to the old magnificence of a hundred and twenty years ago, when "Mr. Handel" was sitting down below me, there where the four fiddlers are, "thrumming" away at his harpsichord, of which I have now actually a fragment before me; and when the "lord-lieutenant" and his court were all crowded together where the ragamuffins are; and when Mr. Dubourg was leading off his fiddlers to the Hallelujah chorus, then heard for the first time. And using my right of access to the stage, I find my way to the ancient saloon, awfully damp and green, with the plaster peeling off, known then, as it is known now, as the "Grove Room," and which has an air of the old quality and spaciousness of the old days when the lord-lieutenant and his nobility came—the ladies without hoops, the gentlemen without swords, to give more room to Mr. Handel—and waited here while the "chairs" and coaches were called. And surely this is some ghost of that ancient Messiah of a hundred and forty years ago! No. It is only Myles singing the Cruiskeen Lawn, which he is not allowed to sing long, for here is the whole house coming in in obstreperous and frantic chorus, shrieking their satisfaction in their "li-li-li-tle Cruiskeen Law—n!"

Myles, I must confess, is scarcely as efficient as the original representative of the character, neither in his dress (he wears an old white hat without brim or crown, which gives him the air of a house-painter), nor in his bearing. At the same time, as the audience take so much part in the drama, acting, in fact, as a sort of classical "chorus," it is hard for him to work up his points properly. Thus, at one of the finest situations in the play, when Myles, expos-

tulating with Hardress, has thrown the painter's cap upon the ground, and is advancing on that gentleman, desiring to know "would ye make hur yer misthriss?" and is about to deliver the well-known burst about his (Myles's) retaining the "old spark of virtue," notwithstanding the temptation his peculiar course of life has exposed him to:—I say, at this crisis, it *is* disturbing to be encouraged by cries of "Give it to him!" "Hit him, Myles!" and I sympathise with that honest actor (Mr. Farrell, I think) when he stops and silences the unruly throng with a look of scorn and anger. At the same time, I cannot but admire his readiness, for when encored unreasonably over and over again in that "Cruiskeen Lawn" (from motives of pure selfishness in the audience, who only want to encore themselves), with singular tact he substitutes for the last verse, "And when grim death appears," &c., which even I was growing a little weary of, some lines to this effect:

> And when your hearts are sore,
> Ye need but look before,
> And come here when ye can-an-an;
> Here MALACHY you'll find,
> And FARRELL'S not behind,
> (Pointing to his own waistcoat)
> With the heart of a thrue Ire-rish man, man, man!
> The heart of a thrue Ire-rish MAN!

But for little eccentricities I know well that Malachy is not responsible. He has his mind on greater things. He is unconsciously preaching Ruskin and Mr. Carlyle, and we are now drawing on to the water cave, where these principles will be revealed.

It came on me like a surprise. I was not prepared for such Realism. As the scene drew aside, to my astonishment and delight I found the stage three-quarters covered with a dark gloomy-looking pool. The necessities of the stage had indeed compelled him to a slight concession to some of the popular conventionalities: for the margin of the pool had to be masked by a canvas bank, and similarly the approaches at each side, where the hill leads down to the edge of the water, had to be lined with profile declivities. This fiction was unavoidable. But there below us was the *real* water, cold, still, deep, impenetrable, and looking perfectly black, Stygian, and uncomfortable.

I joined cordially in the praise given in the bill to the author of this arrangement, where it is stated that "the tank was under the arrangement of Mr. Malone." Thus, though the idea was Malachy's, the carrying of it out—often the most difficult of the two—was Malone's; and it gave me a better opinion of human nature to see how generously Malachy allowed to Malone the full credit of his exertions.

Hush! they come now at last. More Realism. A real punt, with Danny Mann and the Colleen—ah, in her old red cloak!—on board. Yet more Realism: for it will be recollected that the Danny, in order to stifle the sense of the crime he is about to commit, has almost stupified himself with liquor; and it seems to me, from a certain unsteadiness in the management of the punt, that the conscientious actor has been "priming" himself. This would be quite in keeping with what I know of Malachy's character. Onward they move over the dark water, amid the cheers of the audience; but the punt is ill trimmed and ill managed, and rocks fearfully, and just as they touch the centre rock, the Danny is overboard, and the Colleen is prematurely submerged up to her middle. With infinite presence of mind the Danny rights the punt, has clambered on board, has landed the Colleen Bawn on the rock, and has proceeded to execute his purpose according to the programme. I am ashamed to say that indecent laughter greets this casualty.

Now, comes the well-known murder of the girl; and, having a commanding position, I see that a sort of dry wooden cell, or caisson, has been contrived next the rock, into which the poor struggling thing is plunged. Another concession to old prejudices, or rather to the Colleen's own private feelings, who, for no consideration of salary, could be induced to consent to realistic immersion! And I can make all allowance, seeing a wasted-looking neck over the red cloak, and a very spare figure, and something like a consumptive chest, and I can very well excuse Miss Lydia Rooney.

Now comes the retribution. Myles is at hand on the canvas bank, swings himself over by the rope—but mark how different the effect of swinging across *real water* instead of across "some ribbons of blue muslin," as Malachy puts it, for here is the *sense of danger*—sees that otter we all know of, and fires his—pistol in this case. It misses, but Danny, wishing to save the situation, plunges backward into the water, is seen struggling there for a time, and is got off at the wing somehow.

Then comes the "Header"—mark you, a *true* header. Nothing finer could be conceived. A splash of water that goes up to the ceiling. Even the very noise is satisfactory, for we always missed *that* in the *other* performance. Myles is an accomplished swimmer. For we can all see him paddling about; and not content with these exertions in the holy cause of rescuing the drowning, he comes out, and "goes in" again with yet another plunge. But it is a cold night, and the spectacle becomes really almost as heroic as the original philanthropy, for both are done in the cause of duty. At last he gets near to the dry caisson, out of which he draws the hapless Eily, raising her to the surface, and he gasping and leaning on the rock for support in the traditional way. Poor Eily! She has her wet probation in the cause of duty also, and not the least unpleasant portion must be that damp embrace.

Talking the matter over with Malachy afterwards, and I need hardly say congratulating him on his exertions, he tells me the difficulties he had to encounter were most dispiriting. The construction of "the tank," even with the aid of Malone, was almost disheartening. The

water *would* come through; and for a long time there was a steady ooze, which defied discovery, until it was found that the pit was rapidly becoming an unreclaimed bog. This element, however, was baffled—perhaps by the ingenuity of Malone. He bore generous testimony to the "willingness" of Myles, who was ready on any night, no matter what the weather. Even last March, when every one was enjoying his skating, this devoted gentleman went through his duty as usual; but the performances had to be suspended, owing to Myles, not unnaturally, contracting a rheumatic fever.

Taking it all in all, it is a move in the right direction, and the least I can wish Malachy is a "collar of gold."

A HARBOUR OF REFUGE.

The time of year has now arrived when most people have formed all their plans for the autumn months, and have settled where they will spend the season of general relaxation. Some are gone to Scotland, some to the German watering-places, some to the English coast, and some to foreign sea-side stations. They are bound, for the most part, in search of pleasure, rest, and change. Good luck be with them!

But there is another class of persons who are beginning to think of flight about this time, in favour of whom our sympathies should be the most strongly enlisted of all. These are they who, in forming their plans, have something besides pleasure to think of, who are preparing rather for the winter season than the autumn, and who have before them a period of absence from their native country of many months' duration. Exiles these, banished by no human authorities, but by a Power before which human authority must bow in unresisting humility. I speak of the chronically sick and enfeebled, and of those who watch over them and direct their movements.

And whither are all these individuals bound? They are all going in search of health; are they all going to the same place? By no means. They are going, some to Madeira, some to Algeria; others to Egypt, and yet others to the less distant shores of the Mediterranean, to Hyères, Cannes, Nice, Mentone, or other settlements on the Riviera. Of that last-named place of residence, Mentone, the author of this paper, having had something more than four months' experience, will say a word or two.

It is a good deal the custom among those who are acquainted with the south of France to draw comparisons between Nice and Mentone. Now, except in the matter of climate, it is hardly possible to do this reasonably, the two places being so very different. The one is a town, a sort of small capital, a place of fashionable resort, where people get themselves up very magnificently, and drive about in handsome equipages with stepping-horses and liveried servants, where calls are made and visits paid at the canonical hours, where balls are given, and dinners, and where smart people from England, and princesses from Russia, and leaders of ton from Paris, congregate in considerable numbers, dressing themselves in splendid attire, and driving, and riding, and dancing, and flirting very much as they might in Belgravia, or in the Champs Elysées.

This is Nice. Mentone, on the other hand, separated from Nice only by some twenty miles of Maritime Alps, is little more than a village of one street, is quiet and unsophisticated in the extremest degree, and after ten o'clock at night lies steeped in a repose which is only broken on rare occasions by the appearance in the main thoroughfare of some Englishman of unwonted hardihood, who has been guilty of the frantic dissipation of having a game of billiards at the Cercle.

How can these two stations be compared? At Nice there are two distinct elements discernible in the local society: the fashionable element, and the invalid element. At Mentone the invalid element is altogether predominant, and a certain seriousness and unworldliness, so to speak, is observable about the tone of the place, which is remarkable, and perhaps—considering the cause of it—somewhat touching. At Nice you may spend your winter in gaiety and, if you like, in dissipation, and you may manage to fight pretty successfully against reflection; but at Mentone you *must* lead a quiet life, you *must* fall back, to some extent, on your own resources, and you *must* think.

The superiority of the Mentone climate over that of Nice has been established by the almost universal opinion of those who have made this subject a study. The violent storms of wind which are so common at Nice are only found at Mentone in a very modified form, and are of more rare occurrence. The Nice wind is indeed a thing apart, and can hardly be appreciated by any who have not themselves had experience of it. It is arid, furious, withering, and is accompanied by such whirling clouds of fine dust, that the unhappy wayfarer who happens to be out of doors when the storm comes on, is involved, in a moment, in a dense cloud of infinitesimal sandy particles, which, like a London fog, renders the objects about him entirely invisible, even if he dared open his eyes, which it would be the height of imprudence to do.

The first intimation which he receives of mischief brewing, is a peculiar one. A sort of darkness suddenly comes on when the daylight should be at its brightest, and (this when the wind itself is as yet inaudible) all the doors, which are most likely numerous, belonging to his apartment begin to rattle. The effect of this is very peculiar, and in no wise exhilarating. A terrific roar is presently heard outside; then the jalousies begin to flap and rattle, then the wind makes a rush at the building in which our stay-at-home friend is sitting before a wood fire, and finding ingress by the chimney, crams the smoke down it (as the ramrod drives the charge into a gun-barrel) and discharges it into the room in a massive

horizontal column, blinding our wretched invalid in a moment, and in the same moment covering every object in the apartment, chairs, tables, eatables, if there happen to be any about, with a penitential garment of dust and ashes. Nor is it smoke alone which is thus forced into the room; volleys of sparks and embers fly out of the fireplace as well, and you find yourself without warning in a perfect "chamber of horrors," and with your eyes full of irrepressible and bitter tears. And the storm once begun in this terrible fashion, the hurricane will continue to blow, the smoke to pour down the chimney, the chimney-boards, if there is no fire, to be driven into the rooms, the doors to rattle, and the outside blinds to flap, for a dozen hours at a stretch.

These winds are known doubtless at Mentone as at Nice; but at the former place the storms are of shorter duration, and the dust is less overwhelming. Mentone is a wonderfully sheltered place. It is situated in a bay, and partially surrounded by a ring of mountains, which fortify it against some of the fiercer winds very completely.

There can be no doubt that this health station, as one may venture to call it, is blessed with a rarely beautiful and genial climate. That you have unpleasant weather to encounter at Mentone in the course of the winter and spring months, is a thing about which there can, as a matter of course, be no doubt. You have occasional fierce winds, you have comparatively cold days, and you have a fair share of rain, *but you have no winter*. You have autumn and spring, and you must encounter some of the inclemency which belongs to both those seasons, and expect it; but the intermediate link—the ice-link—which, in our northern climates, holds the autumn and the spring together in bitter union, is wanting. All through that grim period, between November and March, inclusive, you are blessed with abundant sunshine. It is broken at intervals sometimes for four or five days together—though this very rarely indeed—by cloudy or rainy weather, but the sunny days come back, and sunshine is the rule here, and not, as with us in the winter, rare exception. There is, indeed, hardly a month in the year when you may not need to put up an umbrella to protect you from the force of the sun's rays.

This excessive power of the sun during the winter months is one of the peculiarities of the climate in these regions, and is said to be fraught with some amount of danger to persons in delicate health. It is dangerous for this reason: that the contrast between the sunshine and the shade is so great, that the passage from the one to the other is apt to give a deadly chill to those who make such a transition too suddenly. It is a wonderful sun that shines on these shores of the Mediterranean. It is scorching, and seems to have a kind of sting in it that almost gives you pain. The shade, on the other hand, is in its way equally remarkable. There is a sort of blue-black chill about it that makes you shudder. If you have to pass under the shadow of a row of houses in the course of your walk, you compare the sunlit road on this side of it where you are standing, and on the other side of it to which you are going, and quail at the idea of the chilly space between. It is not possible to exaggerate this difference between sunshine and shade at Mentone. When the sunset takes place here, that same chill comes on in an instant. In fact, the shade has it all its own way then, and the medical authorities assure their patients that this is a moment when they should all be in doors. But, taking it even at its worst, it must still be admitted that the winter climate of Mentone is one of extraordinary clemency. It is a port for wrecked humanity to put into. There is safe anchorage to be found in this harbour of refuge, and every facility for the executing of repairs. There are cases known of very battered wrecks putting in here with scarcely a spar standing; but which, after remaining in port some time, and being diligently patched and mended up, have actually been able to stand out to sea again, and able to encounter rough weather without damage. For the most part, however, the vessels which put in here to refit go out only capable of sailing in smoothest seas and in fair weather, and even then are obliged to return to port very often, to go through a course of repairs. Let us be grateful that such harbours of refuge exist!

The beauty of the country round Mentone, and close about it too, is something wonderful. The Maritime Alps surrounding the bay on the shore of which the little town is built, all sorts of gorges and ravines give access to these mountains and to the hill-country beyond. On the sides of the hills and in the valleys are plantations of orange and lemon trees, on terraces raised one over the other, and on the lower ground, and where the shelter is the greatest, you can wander among the groves of olive-trees, wondering as you pass along at the grey indistinct mystery which seems to gather about and beneath them. These olive groves are ghostly places. Underneath the trees, which grow here to a great height, there lies, when they are planted thickly, a strange filmy shadow, in which the tree-trunks and all other objects show like spectral appearances rather than realities, so faint and unreal do they appear. In that dim shade, too, the gnarled and twisted arms of an occasional fig-tree planted here and there, and bare of leaves, writhe like fantastic snakes, and seem to threaten you as you walk beneath them. Such places, lying low in the valleys, with the mountains girding them about, remind one continually of the wood where Dante wandered, where the wolf came out from his lair to meet him, and where Virgilio's pale figure moved ghostly among the ghostly trees.

And often, as the year advances and the spring "comes slowly up," you chance upon some lonely spot still in the olive shade, where, unnurtured by any human hand, and altogether uncared for and forgotten, the red anemones blaze forth in fullest beauty. As you come

upon a bed of these, you take note of the utter seclusion of the place in which they grow, you look around in search of some human dwelling-place, to whose inhabitants the flowers may owe their existence; and, finding no such thing, and marking the almost oppressive solitude which reigns over all the shadowy region round about, a sort of fearfulness mixes with your wonder, you snatch a handful of these splendid creatures hurriedly, and hasten away, looking back from time to time, and as long as it is still in sight, to that isolated spot where the flowers which you have left behind wave and bend in solemn fashion before the spring breezes. The glorious things of nature seem most glorious in this: that they do not need our applause, or court our admiration. We must seek them out if we want to see them, and they are still prodigies of finished beauty, whether there is any one by to admire them or not.

In this beautiful land there are regions where the narcissus grows in such profusion that the ground seems to have a pattern on it like a carpet, and mixed with these are legions and legions of violets, which throw over the old stone walls and banks of earth where they grow the thickest, a sort of halo or mist of purple, infinitely grateful to the eye. And other flowers there are which grow by the beds of the mountain torrents, and which the learned can call by their proper names, while the unlearned can admire them, thank Heaven, none the less, though they may know nothing about them. But many of these you must know well where to look for or you will never find them, growing as they do in retired, and sometimes almost inaccessible places.

And besides this scenery of the mountain and the valley, besides the olive groves, and the terraces where the orange and lemon trees grow, there is sea-side loveliness hereabouts, such as the shores of the Mediterranean can alone provide. Enormous headlands of magnificent form, promontories where the pine-trees and the myrtle-bushes grow down to the sea's edge, and little deep bays, enclosed by these, in which the water, of profoundest blue, lies sometimes motionless as a sea of glass, or gently chafes among the coral rocks, or in the waving of a wand, when the sudden storm arises, dashes against the very rocks which it was but now caressing, in whirling fury, its colour changing in a moment to livid grey in the passion-fit to which it has suddenly given way.

Wonderful, wonderful beauty, both of sea and land. Beauty of sunshine, and of calm, of a glowing earth, and a still blue sea. Beauty of the storm which changes both in a moment, the land lying veiled in a gloomy and fitful shade, and the water raging in dark ungovernable fury. Beauty of the mountain ranges, when the snow has fallen upon them in the night, and when the morning sunlight reveals them, in still and pure relief, against the blue atmosphere behind.

The lovely scenes in the neighbourhood of Mentone are within easy reach of those who can only do but a very little in the way of walking; and here again the place may be favourably contrasted with Nice. About this latter place there is beautiful country in all directions, but then it is not close at hand. There is a considerable extent of weary suburb to traverse before you can get to it, and unless you are strong—which, generally speaking, when you go to Nice you are *not*—you are apt to find yourself at the end of your physical resources while you are yet among the villas of the Carabaçel, or scaling the heights of St. Hélène. At Mentone it is altogether different, and you may be in the midst of the most beautiful scenery five minutes after you have turned out of your own doors. This is by no means a small consideration to invalids and convalescents who can crawl as yet but a very little way daily, and who do not wish that small diurnal excursion to which they are limited, to be made where there are villas enclosed in walled gardens on either side of the way.

It is very well that the walks about Mentone are so beautiful, and that many lovely scenes are within easy access, for locomotion, except by means of one's own legs, is both inconvenient and expensive here. There are no stands of public carriages to be hired at a moment's notice, and if you want a vehicle, your only course is to apply to a proprietor of carriages for it, giving him due notice of your need, and making up your mind beforehand that you will have to pay somewhat heavily. Even the donkeys here—which are very large and fine—are only let out at a price which in many cases is quite exorbitant. Indeed, it must be frankly owned that there is, on all sides, a very strong tendency towards extortion on the part of all the native purveyors of every kind of commodity. But then where is the watering-place, containing any special attraction of its own, where you are *not* plundered? We must not look for it on British soil, at any rate.

The speciality here is the climate, a peculiar air is in the market, and the invalids must bid for it and pay the market price. The place, in a manner, belongs to them. You see them creeping about in the sunshine, with large white umbrellas to shelter them from the very heat which they require, with black box-shaped spectacles which must be worn because of the glare, with respirators, and camp-stools, presenting—and more especially the young men among them, who are very numerous—an appearance which cannot fail to excite very sad feelings. Sometimes, too, you miss one of these well-known figures that you have been accustomed to meet in the course of your daily walks. In a few days more there is a new grave in the English cemetery.

In the matter of church accommodation, Mentone is particularly well provided. The little town is built on a sort of promontory or cape, in the middle of a very large bay, which by this promontory is subdivided into two—an eastern and a western bay. The houses in which visitors reside extend round both these in a

scattered line something like two miles long. Formerly there was only one church here, situated in the eastern bay, but recently another building has been opened at the other end of the town, where the English service is conducted under the excellent superintendence of the Rev. W. Barber, of St. John's, Leicester, so that no one—and this is a point of considerable importance to sick people—has far to go to church.

The town of Mentone itself is not by any means a nice town. For an ex-Italian settlement, it is considered to be rather exceptionally clean and well kept, but this is not saying much. There are odours, and apparently there are *not* drains. Some say that the town is drained into the sea, some that it is drained into the country by means of an ingenious system in which casks and donkey-porterage are combined. There are, in fact, various theories extant as to how this little settlement is drained, but that which seems to force itself most strongly upon the convictions of all dispassionate noses, is the theory that it is not drained at all. Be the system what it may, it is unquestionably odoriferous. But then, is not this the case with every Italian town, and have we not here the delicious perfume of the orange-blossom to drown that other and less agreeable smell?

Some, then, there are who would call this town odoriferous, and some who would call it dull; and doubtless, regarded from the point of view taken by those who are fond of excitement, and given to the pursuit of pleasure, it *is* dull. If you cannot be satisfied with beautiful scenery, and restorative air—warm but not relaxing—if you cannot provide yourself with some occupation which shall engage you for a certain number of hours daily; if you cannot get recreation enough out of country walks, excursions to the neighbouring towns and villages, and a certain amount of intercourse with the visitors to the place, who are generally exceedingly well disposed to be sociable—then it seems probable that Mentone is not the right place for you, and that you had better settle elsewhere for the winter.

An attempt has been made lately to provide some amusement for those who are capable of availing themselves of it, by the inauguration of a sort of casino at some little distance from the town. Here you can read the newspapers, and play at billiards, on condition of paying a certain monthly subscription. Now and then, also, a concert is given at these rooms, and sometimes a few adventurous spirits will even attempt to get up a dance. Such efforts, however, are somewhat spasmodic in character as yet. It is possible that they may prosper better hereafter. The fact is, and this should always be borne in mind, that everybody who comes here is either an invalid, or is in constant attendance upon somebody who is so. If you have got a leg to stand upon, you feel as if you were a sort of interloper who has no business in the place, like an irregular customer who gets into an omnibus full of commercial gentlemen who are bound for the City, and all know each other—"What the deuce business have *you* here?" they seem to say by their looks. There are some here, however, who have come with sick friends or relatives, and who, being themselves almost exceptionally strong and robust, wear so defiant and sturdy an air as they march along, prepared with baskets slung round them, and alpenstocks in their hands to ascend the mountains, that their carriage seems almost unfeeling and entirely inconsiderate towards the weaker Mentonists. It is certainly not the place for strong and energetic people. There is nothing going on, no theatre except a sort of booth with a pay place outside, and which is never open. There are, indeed, no evening amusements of any kind, for the place is intended for invalids, and they must not go out after dark. So the friends in health are apt to find themselves a little low in their spirits, and are apt to look frequently at their watches, and to express astonishment that it is still so early. The sources of excitement are certainly not many. There is the departure and arrival of the diligence which travels daily between Mentone and Nice, and there is nothing to prevent you from looking on at these ceremonies, when you will observe that all the horses have raw places on them, and that all the raw places have buckles rubbing against them. Perhaps it is this circumstance which makes their tempers fractious, but certain it is that you must mind where you stand, or you may chance to get a kick. Then it is possible to walk to the frontier, which is not far off, and to stand in front of the stone which marks it, with one leg in France and the other in Italy. This is quite a grand sensation, and he who so stands will invariably feel that he has done something exceedingly clever, something to be mentioned afterwards to his grandchildren. The change of language is proclaimed at once upon that stone. "France" is on the French side of it, but on the other is inscribed the euphonious word "Italia."

The two nations are in this neighbourhood greatly at loggerheads, and the French annexation is somewhat unpopular with the Italians. Even the names of the towns are being Gallicised; Villa Franca has become Ville Franche, and Mentone, Menton. The pronunciation of this last word has become quite a badge of party. The Italian faction, adhering to the original spelling, and pronouncing the final "e;" while the French appear sometimes not to understand you unless you pronounce the word in accordance with the French idiom—Menton.

Mentone is by no means a gourmand's paradise, and a sojourn in this town should never be recommended to those who depend much upon the pleasures of the table. It is not merely that there is great difficulty in getting hold of a cook with clean and wholesome views in connexion with this great art, but that the materials with which the culinary artist has to deal are to so great an extent defective. There are no vegetables at Mentone, only some very bad oranges in the way of fruit, scarcely any fish,

though the town is almost *in* the sea, and the beef and mutton are poor in the extreme. And how should it be otherwise? There is literally no pasturage here, and both sheep and oxen are kept in stables, cellars, dwelling-houses, anywhere, in short, out of the way.

The sheep at Mentone are animals such as—thank goodness—one does not meet with every day. Indeed, at first you hardly recognise them as being sheep at all. They are shockingly tall; they have long attenuated legs, large hooked noses with a great prominent bone sticking out in their midst, they possess mangy dangling tails, with a great knob or tassel at the end, and are altogether so revolting in appearance, that they deprive you of your appetite for mutton from the time when you first encounter a flock of these spectres entering the town. These sheep are taken out for walks at regular hours, like a school. They walk for the most part on the beach close to the sea, and there is a shepherd in attendance, like an usher. The mutton, which is the result of such a state of things as this, is very much what might be expected. It is tasteless, there is not much of it, and it is defective in nutritive qualities. The sheep pass an abnormal existence, and Nature enters her protest with much propriety. The oxen are perhaps even taller in proportion than the sheep. Their stature is elephantine, they are exceedingly thin, their eyes are mild and wobegone, they are of a strange pale colour, and present an appearance calculated to excite pity even in the heart of a drover. They are fed to a large extent, as are also the sheep—in the desperation of a populace unpossessed of grass—on lemons!

As to the manner of living, it is much the same at Mentone as at Nice, only a little less extravagantly dear. There are hotels. There are *pensions* or boarding-houses, and there are villas or suites of apartments. Lodgings, such as abound at our English watering-places, where the landlady supplies the service, and does, or superintends, the cooking, are not to be found. You must either take a villa or "appartement," and set up an establishment of your own with hired servants, the best plan probably for at all a large party, or else you must stay at an hotel or boarding-house. These last are on a large scale here, and are much frequented. They have their advantages. You have no trouble with servants and housekeeping. You can leave at a day's notice if you are uncomfortable, and are not troubled with agreements and inventories, and all the disputes which are so common between landlord and tenant abroad. These immunities you must, however, purchase, as all immunities are purchased in this world, at the expense of certain annoyances of another kind from those experienced by the householder, but annoyances nevertheless. The table d'hôte dinner, unobjectionable—attractive, even, in some ways—when you are travelling about and know nobody at table, becomes not unfrequently a bore when you meet the same people every day for four months, and cannot easily make your election which of them you will know, and which not. At an hotel you can, of course, dine in your own room if you choose, and choose to pay some small amount extra for the privilege. On the whole, unless your party is a large one, it is best to stay at one of the hotels. Two people can live very tolerably at one of these—a private sitting-room and fires, when you want them, included—for from six to seven pounds a week. There is, at any rate, no trouble. As to the dinners, there is always the bouilli and excellent poultry to fall back upon if other things fail; and if things are not as clean as they might be, why, after all, there is that peck which we must all of us swallow, sooner or later. You get it over quickly in the south.

One or two additional peculiarities of Mentone should be put on record, in order to make this brief notice of the place in any sort complete. It should be stated, for instance, that a list of visitors is published weekly. As a novice, you fly to it eagerly on the look-out for names of your friends. After a little experience, however, of the kind of names printed in this list, you lose all confidence in it. The amount of fancy spelling exhibited in these catalogues may amuse, but it does not inform. Who could place any confidence, for instance, in such an announcement as that "Smifwick and family" had arrived, or that "Porkson and suite" were at the Villa Marina?

Some of the manners and customs of the people are objectionable. The native funerals are conducted in a very grisly fashion, and the performers and lookers-on seem to revel in their ghastliness. They take place in the dark. There is a long procession of exceedingly dirty persons who belong to a brotherhood of Penitents, some of whom are white Penitents, and others black. They are dressed in garments which cover the head and face, leaving only great staring eye-holes for the Penitents to see through. The costume of the black Penitents is the most horrible, but it does not show the dirt; that of the white Penitents *does* show the dirt. This remark applies equally to the vestments of the priests and to the surplices of the *enfants de chœur*. The procession is a very long one, with the body borne on a sort of bier in the midst. Everybody carries a candle of the most attenuated and flickering kind, and everybody joins in a discordant, tuneless chant. The effect of all this carried on in the dark, or, worse still, in the dusk, is exceedingly disconcerting.

It is a trying thing, again, that when any work has to be done at Mentone, such as unloading a ship, for instance, which has newly come into port, the inhabitants think it necessary to get up in the middle of the night. Such work as this is accompanied by a considerable amount of noise, and by a vast deal of screaming, so that if you happen to be quartered at all near the port, your night's rest is liable to be affected not a little.

The extent to which the heaviest loads are carried by the Mentone women on their heads, is again apt to affect strangers with dismay. This is the method by which the most enormous

baskets full of oranges and lemons are brought into the town from the neighbouring hill-country. The peasants walk barefoot under these terrible loads, and as each foot is set down the woman's whole frame quivers with the shock. The strange thing is that the women themselves do not seem to mind their own sufferings—for surely they must suffer—and would probably strongly resent any attempt which might be made to ameliorate their condition.

The author has sought in this paper, as far as the space at his disposal permitted, to represent Mentone as it is, neither extenuating anything nor setting down aught in malice. The truth is, that in treating of a place such as this, the greatest care ought to be taken, in order that no risk of giving false impressions may be run. This is no ordinary watering-place, one among others. It is, as has been said above, a sort of harbour of refuge, and it is very important that the exact nature of such harbour should be known to those who think of putting into it. The journey to Mentone is a long one, and the resolution to make it should not be taken—especially by the weak and suffering—without some forethought. The merits and demerits of the place have been plainly stated here, but in "summing up," it seems only fair to say that, in the opinion of one who has passed an exceptionally hard winter at Mentone, and seen it at its worst, the good side preponderates greatly over the evil; for though the place is dull—melancholy even, if you will,—though you may have some amount of discomfort and dirt to encounter, in connexion with household arrangements generally, and those which belong to the kitchen particularly—still it is certain that what those, for the most part, who come here seek they will most surely find—a place of refuge, namely, from the full bitterness of a northern climate, a sheltered nook where they may hide themselves securely till the winter has passed away.

HALF A MILLION OF MONEY.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "BARBARA'S HISTORY."

CHAPTER LVII. A DINNER TÊTE-À-TÊTE.

For the first time since he had come into his fortune, Telemachus had succeeded in persuading Mentor to take dinner with him. He had invited him to gorgeous club dinners, to Richmond dinners, to Blackwall dinners, to snug tête-à-tête dinners at the St. James's-street chambers, and Mentor had systematically and inflexibly declined them, one and all. So the present was quite an eventful occasion; and Telemachus, who had become rather famous for the way in which he entertained his friends, had provided a very recherché little dinner, in honour of his cousin's society.

They met at Saxon's chambers, in St. James's-street. There were flowers on the table, and various kinds of wine in and out of ice on the sideboard, and a succession of the most delicate courses that the most fastidious gourmand could desire. These latter, being supplied by a first-rate house in the neighbourhood, kept continually arriving in cabs, so that the poet was literally right for once, and each dish came "not as a meat, but as a guest."

"Education is a wonderful thing, Saxon," said Mr. Trefalden, when the business of the meal was over, and they were amusing themselves with some peaches and a pine. "The last time you and I dined together, it was at Reichenau. You were then very much surprised because I would not let you drink Lafitte and water, and you had never tasted truffles. You called them 'nasty black things,' if I remember rightly."

"And now I can discriminate between white Hermitage and Château Yquem, and appreciate, as I ought, the genius of the Greeks, who made sixty-two kinds of bread!"

"I fear your newly acquired wisdom will be of little use to you in Norway. By the way, you owe me five hundred and sixty pounds."

"What for?"

"For eight oil paintings, worth about two pounds apiece."

And then Mr. Trefalden, laughing at his cousin's astonishment, told him that he had purchased these pictures from Mrs. Rivière.

"I have called upon them twice or thrice," he said, "and each time I have freely paid away your good coin of the realm. I bought four pictures the first time, two the second, and so forth. They seemed very poor, and very glad to get the money."

"They are not more glad than I am," said Saxon. "When did you see them last?"

"About four or five days ago. They were then just starting for Italy, and are by this time, I suppose, some way upon the road. The mother looked ill. She is not in the least like our friend Lady Castletowers."

"To what part of Italy are they gone?"

"To Nice; where I am to write to them, in case I hear of a purchaser for any more of the paintings. Shall I hear of a purchaser, or do you conceive that you have thrown away enough money for the present?"

"Find the purchaser, by all means," replied Saxon. "Five hundred and sixty pounds are soon spent."

"Out of your purse—yes; but such a sum is a little fortune in theirs."

"I want them to have a hundred a year," said Saxon.

"Which means that our imaginary connoisseur is to spend two thousand pounds. My good fellow, they would never believe it!"

"Try them. It is so easy to believe in pleasant impossibilities."

"Well, I will see what I can do—after all, they are but women, and women are credulous."

"Don't you think her very pretty?" asked Saxon, somewhat irrelevantly.

To which Mr. Trefalden, holding his wine-

glass to the light, replied, with great indifference:

"Why, no—not particularly."

"She is like a Raffaelle Madonna!" said Saxon, indignantly.

"Perhaps—but I am no admirer of Madonnas. Olimpia Colonna is ten times handsomer."

Saxon was silent.

"Have you seen the Colonnas since they left Castletowers?" asked Mr. Trefalden, looking at him somewhat curiously.

"No—I have not had time to call upon them. And now tell me something about the Company."

Mr. Trefalden had a great deal to tell about the Company—about the offices that were in course of erection at Alexandria and Sidon; about the engineers who were already at work upon the line; about the scientific party that had started for Hit, in search of the hoped-for coal strata; about the deputation that was on its way to Bagdad; and, above all, about the wonderful returns that every shareholder might expect to receive in the course of some six or eight years more.

"If I were not bound for Norway," said Saxon, "I would take a trip up the Mediterranean, to inspect the works and report progress."

"It would scarcely repay you at present," replied his cousin. "A year hence there will be more to see. And now farewell to you."

Saxon saw his cousin to the door, and parted from him with reluctance. A few months back he would have kissed him on both cheeks, as on the evening when they first met in Switzerland; but civilisation had rubbed off the bloom of his Arcadianism by this time, and he refrained.

He had scarcely returned to his room, scarcely rung for lights and seated himself at his desk with the intention of writing a few leave-taking notes, and arranging his scattered papers, when he heard a cab dash up to the door, a hasty footstep in the ante-room, and a familiar voice asking if he were at home. The next moment Lord Castletowers was in the room.

"You here to-night!" exclaimed Saxon. "Has anything happened?"

"Only this," replied his friend. "Colonna is summoned to Palermo, and *must* go. He had intended to cross to Sicily from Genoa; but some cabal is on foot, and he has been warned that he is liable to arrest if seen in any French or Sardinian port. Now I come to ask if *you* will take him over?

"To Sicily?"

"Yes—round by Gibraltar. It is Colonna's only safe route; and we could steer northwards as soon as we had landed our man. Do you mind doing this?"

"Not in the least. I would as soon sail in one direction as another—nay, I had far sooner steer southward than northward, if that be all!"

"Then it is settled?"

"Quite—if Signor Colonna will meet us at Portsmouth to-morrow. But I thought you hated the cause, Castletowers, and would do no more for it!"

The Earl smiled sadly.

"One may quarrel with liberty as often as Horace with Lydia," said he; "but one can no more help coming back to her than one can help loving her."

CHAPTER LVIII. SCYLLA AND CHARYBDIS.

Day by day the Albula spread her white wings and skimmed like a sea-bird over the face of the waters. The picturesque Channel Isles; the cloudy cliff of Finisterre; the rock of Gibraltar, blinding white in the glare of the mid-day sun; Mount Abyla, shadowy and stupendous, standing out from the faint line of the African coast; the far peaks of the Sierra Nevada; and the Spanish islands, green with groves of orange and citron, rose one by one out of the blue sea, glided past, and sank away again in the distance. Sometimes no land was visible on either side. Sometimes the little vessel sped along so close under the lee of the wooded headlands, that those on board could hear the chiming of the convent-bells, and the challenge of the sentinels pacing the ramparts of the sea-washed forts. But for the most part they kept well off the shore, steering direct for Sicily. And all this time the two friends mainly lived on deck, acquiring nautical knowledge, growing daily more and more intimate, and leaving Signor Colonna to fill page after page of close and crabbed manuscript in the cabin below. It was a delicious time. The days were all splendour and the nights all stars, and the travellers slept to the pleasant music of the waves.

"Lend me your glass, Trefalden," said Lord Castletowers. "I want to look at that steam frigate. I can't make out her flag."

They had been several days at sea, and were within about eighteen hours' sail of Palermo. A faint blue headland far away to the left marked the southernmost point of the island of Sardinia; while straight ahead, trailing a banner of pale smoke behind her, came the frigate that had attracted Lord Castletowers' attention.

"She seems to be coming our way," said Saxon.

"She is bearing right down upon us," replied the Earl. "And she carries guns—I don't quite like the look of her."

"Do you mean it?"

"I do."

And Lord Castletowers went to the top of the cabin stairs and called to Colonna to come up.

"I want you just to glance at this steamer through Trefalden's glass," said he. "Will you mind giving your pen a moment's rest?"

"Not at all," replied the Italian; and came at once on deck.

His brow darkened at sight of the approaching steamer. He took the glass; adjusted the focus; looked for some ten seconds silently and

steadily; and returned it with but a single word of comment.

"Neapolitan."

"Good God!" exclaimed Castletowers, "what is to be done?"

Signor Colonna hesitated a moment before replying; but when his words came, they were quick and decisive.

"If the captain *has* a motive in bearing down upon us, I am the object of his search. But he cannot be alongside for at least ten minutes. I will hide my papers at once. If Mr. Trefalden will lend me one of his pilot coats, and you will both call me Sir Thomas Wylde, I have no fear of detection. I speak English quite well enough to deceive any Neapolitan. I have done it before, in worse emergencies than this. Remember—Sir Thomas Wylde. I have a passport made out in that name, in case it is asked for."

And with this he plunged back into the cabin; gathered his letters and papers into a handkerchief and hid them in a corner of the caboose; slipped on one of Saxon's blue over-coats gorgeous with anchor buttons; lit a short clay pipe; pulled his cap a little forward over his brow; lay down at full length on a sofa in the cabin; and waited patiently.

"She has signalled for us to lie to!" cried Lord Castletowers down the cabin stairs.

"Lie to, then, by all means."

"And her captain seems to be coming on board."

"He is very welcome."

Lord Castletowers smiled, in spite of his anxiety.

"That man is as cool as an iceberg," said he to Saxon. "And yet he knows he will be swinging from the topmost tower of St. Elmo within forty-eight hours, if these people recognise him!"

And now the great frigate towered alongside the tiny yacht, frowning down with all her portholes, and crowded with armed men.

A ladder was then lowered over the ship's side, and the Neapolitan commander and one of his officers came on board.

The Neapolitan was perfectly polite, and apologised for his intrusion with the best-bred air in the world. He requested to know the name and destination of the yacht, the name of her owner, and the names of all persons on board.

Lord Castletowers, who assumed the office of spokesman, replied in fluent Italian. The name of the yacht was the Albula; she was the property of Mr. Trefalden, who was cruising in the Mediterranean with his friends Lord Castletowers and Sir Thomas Wylde. They had no object whatever in view, save their own pleasure, and could not say in what direction they might be going. Probably to Athens. Quite as probably to Constantinople or Smyrna. Their passports were at the signor capitano's disposition, should he desire to see them.

The signor capitano bowed, and inquired if Milord Trefalden had any intention of landing in Sicily?

The Earl replied that Mr. Trefalden would probably put in at Marsala for fresh water.

"Milord carries no arms, no gunpowder, no munitions of war?"

"Only the brass swivel which the signor capitano perceives on deck, and its appurtenances."

The Neapolitan explained that he was under the necessity of requesting permission to glance into the hold, which was accordingly opened for his inspection. He then asked leave to see the cabin, and went down, accompanied by Trefalden and Castletowers, leaving his lieutenant on deck.

"Our friend Sir Thomas Wylde," said the Earl, with an introductory wave of the hand.

Colonna, who was still lying on the sofa, with his pipe in his mouth, and an old Times supplement in his hand, lifted up his head at these words, rose lazily, made a very stiff bow, and said nothing. The Neapolitan commander returned the bow, made some pleasant remark on the gentilezza of the pretty little cabin, and again apologised for the trouble he had given.

The present insurrection, he explained, compelled his Majesty's government to keep strict watch upon all vessels sailing towards Sicily. It was not an agreeable service for the officers of his Majesty's navy; but it was a very necessary one. He believed that he had now but one duty left to perform. He must trouble milords to hear him read a little proclamation containing the description of one Giulio Colonna, a noted political offender, for whose apprehension his Majesty the King of the Two Sicilies offered a reward of two thousand piastres. The said Giulio Colonna, he might add, was supposed to be even now on his way to Palermo.

He then drew a paper from his pocket-book, and, removing his hat, read aloud in the name of his sovereign a very minute and accurate inventory of Signor Colonna's outward man, describing his eyes, nose, mouth, teeth, hair, beard, moustache, height, and complexion; to all of which Signor Colonna listened with a placid composure that might have deceived Mephistopheles himself.

"What is all that about?" said he in English, when the officer had finished reading. "I do not understand Italian, you know."

Saxon could hardly forbear laughing outright while Castletowers gravely translated the proclamation for the benefit of the supposed Sir Thomas.

Colonna smiled and shrugged his shoulders.

"Pshaw!" said he. "A hopeless quest. They might as well try to catch a swallow on the wing!"

Whereupon the signor capitano, understanding the tone and gesture, though not the words, drew himself up, and replied, with some little assumption of dignity, that the man in question was a notorious traitor, and certain to fall into the hands of justice before long.

He then left the cabin somewhat less graciously than he had entered it, and Lord Castle-

towers, following him upon deck, took occasion to apologise for his friend.

"Sir Thomas is brusque," he said; "but then the English *are* brusque."

To which the Neapolitan replied by a well-turned compliment to himself, and took his leave. He then returned to his ship, followed by his lieutenant; the ladder was drawn up; final salutations were exchanged; the steam frigate hove off with a fiery panting at her heart; and in a few minutes the strip of blue sea between the two vessels had widened to the space of half a mile.

"Hurra!" shouted the Earl. "Come up, Sir Thomas Wylde, and join me in three cheers for Francesco Secondo! You are safely past Scylla this time."

"And Charybdis," replied Colonna, divesting himself of Saxon's blue coat, and answering from below. "Do you know why I did not come on deck?"

"No."

"Because I caught a glimpse of that lieutenant's face as he jumped on board."

"Do you know him?"

"Perfectly. His name is Galeotti. He used to profess liberalism a dozen years ago; and he was my secretary in Rome in 'forty-eight."

CHAPTER LIX. PALERMO.

A GIGANTIC curve of rippling blue sea—an irregular crescent of amber sand, like a golden scimitar laid down beside the waves—a vast area of cultivated slopes, rising terrace above terrace, plateau beyond plateau, all thick with vineyards, villas, and corn-slopes—here and there a solitary convent with its slender bell-tower peeping over the tree-tops—great belts of dusky olives, and, higher still, dense coverts of chesnut and ilex—around and above all, circling in the scene from point to point, an immense amphitheatre of mountains, all verdure below, all barrenness above, whose spurs strike their roots into the voluptuous sea, and whose purple peaks stand in serrated outline against the soft blue sky.

"The bay of Palermo!"

Such was the exclamation that burst from the lips of the two younger men as the Albula rounded the headland of St. Gallo about four o'clock in the afternoon of the day following their encounter with the Neapolitan frigate. Colonna, who had been waiting on deck for the last hour, silent and expectant, held out his arms, as if he would fain have embraced the glorious panorama, and murmured something which might have been a salutation or a prayer.

"Yes, the bay of Palermo!" repeated Lord Castletowers, with enthusiasm. "The loveliest bay in Europe, let the Neapolitan say what he will! That furthest point is Cefala—here is the Monte Pellegrino, crowned with the shrine of Santa Rosalia—yonder, in that mountain gorge, lies Monreale; and this part which we are now passing is called the Conca d'Oro. See, there are the domes of Palermo already coming into sight!"

"And there," said Colonna, pointing to a flag flapping languidly from the battlements of a little tower close down upon the strand, "there, Heaven be praised, is the tricolor of Italy!"

And now, as the yacht drew nearer, a compact forest of spires and pinnacles, glittering domes and white-fronted palaces, rose, as it were, out of the bay at their approach. The sentinel on the Molo flung up his cap and shouted "Viva Garibaldi!" as they passed. The harbour swarmed with large and small craft of every description; speronaroes, feluccas, steamers, and open boats, every one of which carried the national flag conspicuously on mast or bowsprit. The quays were crowded with red shirts, Sardinian uniforms, and military priests; and close against the landing-place, under the shadow of Fort Galita, stood a large body of Garibaldians, perhaps a thousand in number, leaning on their muskets, and chattering with the most undisciplined vivacity imaginable. As Saxon's tiny yacht glided in under the bows of a great ungainly English steamer, some ten or a dozen of the red shirts stepped coolly out of the ranks, and came to the verge of the quay to reconnoitre these new comers.

At that moment, an Italian officer leaning over the side of the steamer cried:

"Ecco il Colonna!"

The name was heard by one of the soldiers on the quay. It flew from lip to lip; it swelled into a shout; the shout was taken up, echoed, repeated, redoubled, till the air rang with it, and the walls of the fortress gave it back again. In an instant the landing-place was surrounded; the deck of every vessel in the harbour became suddenly alive with men; and still the mighty welcome gathered voice:

"Colonna! Colonna!"

He bared his head to their greeting; but scarcely one in each thousand could see him where he stood. Thus several seconds passed, and the shouts were growing momentarily more passionate and impatient, when the accommodation ladder of the great steamer was suddenly lowered, and a young officer came springing down.

"Honoured signore," he said, cap in hand, "his Excellency General Garibaldi is on board, and entreats that you will step on deck."

Pale with emoton, Colonna turned to Saxon and the Earl, and said:

"Follow me."

But they would not.

"No; no," replied Castletowers. "Go up alone—it is better so. We will meet by-and-by."

"At the Trinacria, then!"

"Yes—at the Trinacria."

So Colonna went alone up the side of the City of Aberdeen, and from the midst of a group of red-shirted officers upon her upper deck, there stepped forth one more bronzed and weather-beaten than the rest, who took him by both hands and welcomed him as a brother.

At this sight, the shout became a roar—windows were thrown up, and balconies thronged

in all the houses round about the harbour—the troops on the quay fell back into position, and presented arms—and the first of an impromptu salute of twenty-one guns was fired from Fort Galita.

The two young men looked at each other, and smiled. They had been shouting like the rest, till they were hoarse; and now, when Saxon turned to his friend and said, "Shall we get quietly away, Castletowers, before the storm has subsided?"—the Earl caught at the idea, and proceeded at once to act upon it.

They then sheered off from the City of Aberdeen; moored the yacht close under the quay; beckoned to the nearest boatman; and were rowed, unnoticed, to a landing-place a little further down the harbour.

"And now, Trefalden," said Lord Castletowers, when they presently found themselves on shore, "now for a race over Palermo!"

"Scusate," said a pleasant voice; "but will you accept of a guide?"

It was the young officer of the City of Aberdeen, who had followed them unseen, and overtaken them just as they landed.

In a moment they had all three shaken hands, and were chatting as joyously and freely as if they had known each other for weeks already.

"Have you ever been in Palermo before?" asked the Sicilian.

"Once, about four years ago," replied the Earl.

"Ah, Dio! it is sadly changed. You cannot see from this point what the cursed bombardment has done; but up by the Piazza Nuova the place is one heap of desolation—churches, convents, palaces, all destroyed, and hundreds of corpses yet lying unburied in the ruins! But we mean to take our revenge at Melazzo."

"At Melazzo?" repeated Saxon. "Where is that?"

"What! Do you not know?"

"We know nothing," said Castletowers, eagerly; "nothing of what has happened since we left England. What about Melazzo?"

They had been turning their backs upon the harbour, and proceeding in the direction of the Strada Toledo; but at these words, their new friend seized them each by the arm, and hurried them back to the quay.

"You see that great steamer?" he exclaimed, pointing to the City of Aberdeen. "That steamer on board of which his Excellency invited the Colonna?"

"Yes."

"And those troops drawn up against the landing-place?"

"Yes, yes."

"Well, they are all picked men; the last twelve hundred of the expedition. They are now waiting to go on board, and by ten o'clock to-night will steam out of the harbour. General Cosenz and his Cacciatori are already gone—they went last evening; but Garibaldi himself goes with us in the City of Aberdeen. Melazzo is not far—we shall be there before daybreak; but they say there will be no fighting till the day after to-morrow."

"Why, this is glorious!" cried Saxon.

"Yes, you are in luck to drop in for a siege the day after your arrival," replied the Sicilian. "I have been here for nearly three weeks, and have had nothing to do yet, except to assist in the demolition of the Castello, and that was not amusing. It was all well enough for the first hour or two; but one soon gets tired of pulling down stone walls when there are no Regi behind them."

He then led the way back to the Toledo, pointing out those places where the struggle had been fiercest, asking and answering questions, and pouring forth his pleasant talk with the simple vivacity of a boy.

His name, he said, was Silvio Beni. He was the second son of a Palermitan landowner on the other side of the island, and held the rank of aide-de-camp in the Garibaldian army. He had fought last year as a volunteer at Solferino; but had no intention of becoming a soldier by profession. Fighting for liberty was one thing; but fighting for four pauls a day was another. He meant to cultivate olives and vines, and live the pastoral life of his forefathers, if he did not happen to get shot before the end of the campaign.

Chattering thus, he led Saxon and Castletowers through the chief streets of the city; and a terrible sight it was for eyes unused to the horrors of war. Here were the remnants of the famous barricades of the 27th of May; here the shattered walls of the University, the Pretorio pitted with shot-holes, and the monastery of the Seven Angels, of which a mere shell remained. Then came a stately palace, roofless and windowless—the blackened foundations of a church once famous for its archives—a whole street propped, and threatening to fall at every moment—the charred fragments of a convent in which the helpless sisters had been burned alive beyond the possibility of escape. In some places scarcely one stone was left standing on another. In some, the fiery storm had passed by and left no trace of its course.

Presently, from a broad space of indistinguishable ruin, pestilent with unburied dead, they emerged upon a quarter where the streets were gay with promenaders and the cafés crowded with idlers; where the national flag floated gaily from the roofs of the public buildings, and all the butterfly business of South Italian life was going on as merrily as if the ten-inch shell were a phenomenon the very name of which was unknown to Sicilian ears.

Saxon could not comprehend how these people should be eating ices and playing at dominoes, as if nothing had happened of late to disturb their equanimity. It seemed to him inexpressibly shocking and heartless; and, not being accustomed to conceal his opinions, he said so, very bluntly.

The Sicilian smiled and shrugged his shoulders.

"They are so happy to be free," he replied, apologetically.

"But what right have they to be happy while their dead lie unburied at their very doors?" asked Saxon, indignantly. "What right have they to forget the hundreds of innocent women and children crushed and burned in their homes, or the Neapolitans who massacred them?"

"Ah, gli assassini! we will pay them out at Melazzo," was the quick reply.

And this was the Sicilian temperament. Sights which filled Saxon and the Earl with pity and horror, brought but a passing cloud upon the brow of their new acquaintance. He had seen them daily for three weeks, and grown familiar with them. He talked and laughed in the very precincts of death; scrambled up the barricades; showed where the Regi had been repulsed, and at which point the Garibaldians had come in; chattered about the cession of Nice, the probable duration of the war, the priests, the sbirri, the foreign volunteers, and all the thousand-and-one topics connected with the revolutionary cause; and thought a great deal more of the coming expedition than of the past bombardment.

At length, just as they came out upon the Marina, a gun was fired from Fort Galita, and their Sicilian friend bade them a hasty farewell.

"That is our signal for assembling on board," said he. "If you reach Melazzo before the work is begun, ask for me. I may be able to do something for you. At all events, I will try."

"We won't forget that promise!" replied Saxon, eagerly.

"Addio, fratelli."

And these young men who looked forward to the coming fight as if it were a pleasure-party, who were total strangers to each other one short hour ago, but who were brought into contact by accident, and into sympathy by their love of liberty, their careless courage, and their faith in a common cause, embraced and parted, literally, as brothers.

The friends then went straight to the Trinacria Hotel, and, learning that Colonna had not yet arrived, turned at once towards the quay. Here they found a dense crowd assembled, and the City of Aberdeen with her steam up, and all the troops on board.

The people were frothing over with excitement, and so densely packed that the young men might as reasonably have tried to elbow their way through a stone wall as through the solid human mass interposed between themselves and the landing-place. They gathered from the exclamations of those around them that the troops were drawn up on deck, and that Garibaldi was known to be in the saloon. Now and then a shout was raised for some officer who appeared for a moment on deck; and sometimes, when nothing else was doing, a voice from the crowd would give the signal for a storm of vivas.

Presently an officer of Cacciatori, with the well-known plume of cocks' feathers in his hat, came hurrying down the quay. The crowd parted right and left, as if by magic, and he passed through amid a shower of benedictions and addios.

"Do you know who that is?" asked Saxon of those around.

"No—God bless him!" said one.

"We only know that he is going to fight for us," said another.

"The Holy Virgin and all the saints have him in their keeping!" added a third.

At this moment the crowd surged suddenly back again—a great roar burst from the thousand-throated throng—a gun was fired—and the City of Aberdeen was under weigh!

In another second the mass had wavered, parted, turned like a mighty tide, and begun flowing out through the Porta Felice, and following the course of the steamer along the Marina Promenade. The soldiers on board stood motionless, with their hands to the sides of their hats, saluting the crowd. The crowd raced tumultuously along the shore, weeping, raving, clapping its hands for the soldiers, and shouting "Viva Garibaldi! Viva la Liberta!" One woman fell on her knees upon the quay, with her little infant in her arms, and prayed aloud for the liberators.

Saxon and the Earl stood still, side by side, looking after the lessening steamer, and listening to the shouts, which grew momentarily fainter and more distant.

"Good Heavens!" said Castletowers, "what a terrific thing human emotion is, when one beholds it on such a scale as this! I should have liked to see this people demolishing the Castello."

Saxon drew a deep breath before replying, and when he spoke his words were no answer to the Earl's remark.

"I tell you what it is, Castletowers," he said; "I feel as if we had no business to remain here another hour. For God's sake, let us buy a couple of red shirts, and be after the rest as fast as the little Albula can get us through the water!"

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AT THE BAR.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "A CRUISE UPON WHEELS," &c. &c.

CHAPTER X. AT A CONCERT.

THE specimen which was given in the last chapter of this narrative of Gilbert Penmore's failure to make a favourable impression on the fraternity of attorneys, was by no means an isolated one. He was not the man for them. They did not understand what was in him, it came out so grudgingly, as it seemed to them. There were plenty of lawyers of much less ability to whom the attorneys would take their work in preference, and Penmore would see himself passed over continually, while others of much less knowledge and discernment, but glib of utterance, were full of business.

It is half the battle in this profession of the law, as in not a few others, to have a reputation for being extraordinarily busy. The awful truth —fresh confirmations of which come before us daily—that "to him that hath shall be given," seems to be powerfully illustrated in a case of this kind. It is a fact that the man who has already much to do receives even more and more employment continually. Everything in the shape of business comes his way. He is invited, nay implored, to undertake what he really has not time to do justice to, while the very excuses which he makes, the mere announcement that he has already more to do than he can attend to properly, only makes his employers more and more anxious to secure his much-coveted services.

"I understand," says somebody who knows, "that Scruncher the dentist is obliged to retire from his operating-room six times daily, in order to empty his pockets of the inconvenient weight of guineas which accumulate in them." Away rushes any one who hears the announcement, to be tortured forthwith by Scruncher. "Chalkey the artist," says somebody else, "has commissions, I am told, which will occupy him for the next seven years at least," and off darts the art-patron to make sure of Chalkey's services during that eighth year which is still to let.

But our young lawyer had other things to trouble him besides professional neglect. Vexations of a more domestic sort were not wanting; and, as if those words which we have quoted above were true of what troubles us as well as of what brings us profit, accumulation of domestic perplexity came upon our friend in addition to his professional difficulties, and as if these last were not enough.

It was one of the leading features of Miss Carrington's peculiar character that her moral vision was somewhat oblique in the matter of truth. Not only was she in the habit of "embroidering," or in other words decorating what professed to be fact with fictitious ornamentation, she went beyond this, and would sometimes even deal in fiction such as had no foundation whatever in fact, the fruit of a powerful imagination only. Indeed, so powerful was this lady's imagination, that after any idea had been presented to her by that function two or three times, she would get to think that it really was something more than a fancy of her mind, and would speak of it as nothing less than a reality.

To what extent this lady believed that Gilbert Penmore had once been in love with her, it would be difficult to say. She certainly went on as if he had, as was shown in the matter of the photograph, nor did she let slip any opportunity of impressing this fiction on the mind of her hostess, always taking a tone as if she conceded to Gabrielle the right to associate, indeed, with her husband, and to live in the house, but as if *she* were the person who really understood him, and whose life should, by right, have been associated with his. She was a woman, not a mere girl like Gabrielle. She would have understood his character, entered into his thoughts and his ambition, and would, in short, have been in all respects the right person for him.

Now of course it was not likely that Miss Carrington would put all this into words. Yet she managed somehow or other to insinuate it all, by dark hints, and gestures, and covert allusions. Gabrielle knew that this woman was vapouring and talking nonsense. She knew that when her husband first came over to England he had passed a few days at the house of Miss Carrington's father, who was since dead, that he had spent the time almost entirely in fishing, and that no idea of Miss Carrington, except in the light of a somewhat disagreeable young woman, had so much as entered his head. And yet, though she knew all this, and knew that the image of his dear West Indian had never for a moment been supplanted in his mind by that of any other woman, still the preposterous conduct of this lady in asserting a sort of tone of superiority over her, and of proprietorship in her own Gilbert, did, at times, annoy and irritate her vastly.

And she had to encounter these things to a great extent alone. It was seldom that Gilbert could be by to help her. When he was there he always took her part, and kept the enemy in order, but at other times she suffered much.

They were two to one against her, for Miss Carrington's aide-de-camp, the faithful Cantanker, was always on the spot and ready to back her mistress up on all occasions, and, in so far as opportunity served, to put our poor young housewife down. She would always address her—and she never did so except when absolutely obliged—as "Mrs. Penmore," never using the generally inevitable term, "ma'am," or even "mum." By this means she avoided any expression of allegiance, and retained that dignity which was so dear to her, at the same time that she ignored all claim on the part of the young lady to be the mistress of the house. It was well and skilfully done.

All the unpleasant messages, too, came through the Cantanker medium, and certainly lost nothing by being entrusted to her for delivery. "My mistress," she would say, appearing at breakfast-time, and, as her habit was, closing the door behind her before she began to speak, "my mistress will take her breakfast up-stairs, Mrs. Penmore, and, she was wishful for me to say that she would feel especially obligated if the tea could be sent up warm, as yesterday it was but stone cold." It was not very unusual for Miss Carrington to take her meals, and breakfast especially, in her own room, and those were days of jubilee for our young couple when she did so, as they were free from her company, and that of her amiable attendant. This last was almost sure, however, to appear in the course of the meal with some message about the coldness of the tea or the toughness of the toast, or perhaps, if lunch rather than breakfast was in hand, she would meekly request that the broth "might not have its surface covered with circles of grease floating about on the top like islands." Miss Cantanker was too well pleased when a spiteful simile came to her aid to inquire whether the image was a correct one, or she might perhaps have hesitated at the idea of floating islands and changed the metaphor to ships.

Miss Carrington seemed determined to lose no opportunity of showing her disapproval of poor Gabrielle, and her wish to hold an intercourse with Gilbert, from which his wife should be excluded. She would send down messages to him to the effect that "she was expecting a few friends that evening, and she had no gentleman to meet Captain Scraper, and would he come up and join the party?" or she had got two orders for the opera, could he make it convenient to escort her? "It would be so nice," she would write on a slip of paper. Or would he come up and play a game of piquet, she felt so very dull. Or she had a matter of business to consult him about, could he manage to "step" up-stairs for half a minute?

No doubt she had got hold of the wrong person in Gilbert Penmore. Not only had he a powerfully developed antipathy towards the lady herself, and a very strong objection to finding himself in her society, but he felt very keenly the intentional slights, which, by every one of her acts, was being put upon his dear Gabrielle. And this was touching him upon a tender point indeed. With every day that passed it seemed as if the love between these two increased. No slight that was offered to her, no repulse that met his efforts to get on, but seemed to bind them more and more together, and to invest each with nobler qualities in the other's eyes.

Over and over again would Gilbert insist on bringing the thing to an end, and giving his cousin warning, come of it what might, and it was only the entreaties and tears even of his wife that prevailed with him to let it go on a little longer. A little longer, she said, and then he would get to be acknowledged, and would be a great man, and then they would take a new house, and become quite distinguished characters. Meanwhile, he must be patient and put up with Miss Carrington's provocations, and not suppose that she minded them in the least. And she would even press him sometimes—but not very much—to do what his cousin asked of him, to go and give her the benefit of his advice in business matters, or even to escort her to the play. But here, even she could not prevail. Her husband was adamant. He compromised the matter by promising that he would not give her warning, but his invariable answers to all Miss Carrington's overtures was, that he was "much too busy" to accept them.

Our lives are made up of small things, and I cannot develop the tale which I have got to tell without dwelling on a multitude of matters which appear to be small, but which, when combined, make a large aggregate. It is my present business to show how this young couple were aggravated, past endurance almost, by the vagaries of a spiteful and tiresome woman, and a foolish person into the bargain, which, perhaps, was the worst part of it all.

There was indeed, as the saying goes, no knowing where to have this vexatious lady. She was always complaining how dull she was, but she would accept no alleviation of her dulness. If they sent her up some book or periodical in the wish to amuse her, she was sure to send it down again with an intimation that it was trash, and that she could not read it. If a friend came in the evening, and our young couple, thinking a change might enliven her, sent to invite her to spend the evening, she would either decline to come at all, or coming, would make herself profoundly disagreeable, retaining a forced gravity when others were disposed towards merriment, and setting herself in an unmistakable manner against the unfortunate friend, whoever he might happen to be, contradicting every word that dropped from his lips, generally insulting him grossly, and altogether throwing a wet blanket over the little party.

Or perhaps something might be attempted in the way of a visit to some public place of entertainment. On one occasion Mr. Lethwaite—

whom she detested—sent some tickets for a concert given by a musical society to which he belonged, and one of these was presented to Miss Carrington, the other two being retained by her host and hostess. It was a wonderful society. Its members were as proficient as professionals, and ten times as technical. They were entirely absorbed in music. Their real professions—when they had any—were comparatively as nothing to them. They must get through their business, whatever it might be, and then to fugue. When two of them met, no matter where it might be, one took the other aside, and it was a question of music directly. He had been to Germany or to Paris; had heard an old piece by Spohr, or a new piece by Wagner.

"There's a movement, my dear fellow, goes like this, 'la, la, la, ri, ta, ta, ra.' Oh, the divinest thing you ever heard in all your life; and then it goes on, 'ta, la, ra, ti, la, ri, la.'" And so they would continue for half an hour together. In short, their souls were in it, and they went at it with a will.

But the harmony produced by the combined talent of this wondrous society made no impression upon Miss Carrington. When the first violin, coming forward to the front of the orchestra, and, getting his instrument well underneath his chin, caused it to emit sounds so prodigious in volume—considering its size—or so tenderly plaintive as to move the greater part of the audience alternately to wonder and to tears, the sounds produced by this brilliant performer awakened no response in Miss Carrington's bosom. Even when it came to the strong passages, and Mr. Julius Lethwaite took his place behind two brilliantly polished copper drums, looking as eager as Fieschi may have done behind his infernal machine, and keeping his eye upon his conductor as fixedly as if he were going to let the said drums off at him at a given moment, and when the moment did come, and the machines were let off, and, instead of discharging volleys of grape and slugs and crooked nails, emitted a low rumbling sound like distant thunder—even then, and when the drums, at a later period, got excited and rattled their very loudest, till the conductor was compelled to look towards Mr. Lethwaite with a slight frown—even at these times, let it be frankly owned, Miss Carrington was never moved to admiration, but only to say, in reference to Mr. Lethwaite, and his exertions in the orchestra, that she "wondered any man could make such a fool of himself."

Now all this was not agreeable. And then she was so fidgety that there was no possibility of keeping her quiet for ten minutes together. Mr. Penmore had arranged, with considerable skill, that his wife should sit between him and Miss Carrington, as he knew that if she sat next to him she would not let him alone the whole evening. This state of things was, however, by no means agreeable to the lady, and in due time she began to agitate for a change in the relative positions of the party. "There was a gentleman sitting next her," she said, "who would hum the music to himself as the orchestra played it, and it was too dreadful." And then came the request—"would Mrs. Penmore mind changing places with her, as the effect upon her nerves was such that she must either get out of hearing of the obligato accompaniment, or leave the concert-room." Of course poor Gabrielle had to give way, and we all know what such a change of position involves in these days of distended costume. Then, of course, having gained her point, she would begin ear-wigging the unfortunate Gilbert, much to his annoyance and to that of their neighbours, who were all fierce amateurs, eager to catch every note of the performance. Indeed, these at last began to look round and frown to such an extent, that Gilbert was obliged at last to call his cousin's attention to the fact, upon which the lady lapsed into sulkiness, and then fell asleep, and, waking shortly afterwards, declared that she was feeling very ill, and that "she was very sorry, but she must go away that moment." The first violin was at the time in the middle of a solo, impregnated with so much feeling as to be hardly audible, and it may be imagined that the looks of the amateurs were not very amiable as our little party swept out, disturbing everybody in the vicinity, knocking down opera-glasses, dragging books of the score in their wake, and spreading ruin and desolation in all directions.

"Could not you have waited till there was a strong passage with the drums to cover our retreat?" asked Gilbert, with pardonable irritability, when they got outside.

Miss Carrington intimated that she should have fainted if she had stayed another moment, but said that she felt pretty well again now.

And so poor Gabrielle, who seldom got a change, was dragged away, just as she was enjoying the music most. Yet there was consolation even in this, for it vexed her always to see Miss Carrington making that dead set at her cousin Gilbert.

"We are just talking over our remembrances of a certain concert that we went to ages ago," Miss Carrington had whispered to Gabrielle some little time after that change of seats had taken place, which has been spoken of above. "Such fun we had, and such a nice drive home," Miss Carrington added. "By moonlight, you know."

Now all this, I am sorry to say, was pure fiction—that sort of fiction which came so naturally to Miss Carrington, as has been hinted at in the beginning of this chapter. The fact had been, that when Gilbert Penmore visited his relation, Mr. Carrington, a party had been made to attend a concert which was got up in the neighbouring town. The company had driven some miles to the town-hall, where the concert was held, had been bored to death by some exceedingly dull music, and had then driven back again. The carriage in which Miss Carrington had performed that delightful journey, having contained, besides her father, the clergyman of the parish, and young Penmore, the latter slumbering peacefully all the time. Such was the fact. But Miss Carrington's remembrance of it was somewhat different.

"We had an evening of the intensest enjoyment of the most delicious music," she whispered to Gabrielle. "Italian singers down from London, all in their very best voice; a delightful moon to light us home; your husband and I had a carriage to ourselves, and he in such spirits all the way—very different to what he is now."

It was thus that this estimable lady sought to entertain her friend, and thus it is that a powerful imagination will decorate incidents in themselves dull and common-place.

CHAPTER XI. STILL MUSICAL.

Mr. Julius Lethwaite was, as we have just seen, a member of an embodied association of musical amateurs. The gentlemen of whom this association was composed were many of them most skilful performers. They made up, when all assembled, a full orchestra, and the duty of discharging not the least arduous function in that band of harmony devolved on no less a person than our cynical friend. In a word, he was the artist on the kettle-drums. And this is a much more difficult part to play than one would at first imagine.

There is, for instance, a vast amount of counting to go through. The performer has to know his place and keep to it. One touch of the drumstick at an unexpected moment would ruin a whole overture. Beautiful and inspiriting as are the notes of this charming instrument, their effectiveness is yet pre-eminently dependent on their coming in in the right place and at the right moment. An absent-minded drummer, or one but imperfectly acquainted with the art of counting, has been known to rattle suddenly in an unexpected place, and by so doing to bring confusion and shame upon himself, involving at the same time his fellow-performers, engaged at the time in developing a soft cadence with exquisite feeling, in ignominy and contempt. Nor must this important functionary ever be "backward in coming forward" when he is due. Let him be lost in thought, or absorbed in the melody made by his companions, at the moment when his services are required, and all is over—the effectiveness of the passage is lost, and when he is brought to his senses by the furious glance of the conductor withering him from the leader's desk, it is ten to one that he instantly sets to work to make up for lost time, and ruins everything with inopportune rattlings.

And this—this is the instrument which we have all of us no doubt at times been disposed to conceive lightly of. This is the instrument on which, as boys, we have believed we could perform without difficulty, only wishing, indeed, that we could get the chance. On this instrument men have ventured to confer a name almost characterised by levity, associating it with kettles and the like ignoble utensils.

Our good friend Mr. Lethwaite was fully sensible of the dignity attaching to the instrument to which he had devoted himself, and of the difficulties which beset the performer who would achieve the art of drumming with effect. He was continually at work, early and late. The fact is, that he was afraid of his leader. That gentleman was Mr. Lethwaite's inferior in every respect, except in musical proficiency. There he was his superior. He was a severe gentleman, too, and had had occasion more than once to reprove the kettle-drum, alternately for too great haste and too great tardiness, both, as has been already shown, defects of the most radical sort. To please this leader was very difficult, and therefore it was that Mr. Lethwaite worked early and late.

Our friend was sitting on a certain morning, soon after the day of that concert, in the course of which the conductor had looked upon him with a frown, and was practising the kettle-drums in his luxurious rooms. The scene was one suggestive of the greatest comfort. Comfortable sofas and settees were against the walls, and fauteuils, right in their construction to half an inch of wood-work and half a grain of stuffing, were drawn round the fireplace. The walls were hung with a few good pictures, and various cedar boxes, containing *not* a few good cigars, were scattered about upon the different tables. There had been no "reasoning of our need," as King Lear expresses it. The results of careless expenditure appeared everywhere, and most of the objects which met the eye in all directions were such as a man could do without perfectly well. How much had been spent on that watch-making freak alone. What good materials, what admirable instruments had been got together. In how many holes was not that watch to have been jewelled, what escapements, what compensation balances had there not been prepared for its more perfect completion?"

And the other hobby, there was money spent upon that too. Mr. Lethwaite had got a bran new pair of drums on which to operate. German-silver drums were these, none of your ordinary copper or brass. The leather slides by which the cords were tightened were of spotless buck-skin, and the parchment was white as snow, and smooth as an ivory tablet. That parchment was tightened up to concert pitch, and the tone imparted by those metallic basins, across which it was strained, was really something ravishing. The drumsticks had inlaid handles, and were a study in themselves.

Our friend was not alone as he sat behind these two masterpieces of art, and with his music-book on a desk before him. In his desire to get everything right for the next performance, he had got a certain other member of the society (the third fiddle, in short) to come round and practise with him, in order that he might the more readily acquire the important art of coming in in the right place, and keeping out of the wrong, in which he felt himself to be still somewhat deficient. The third fiddle was a most obliging creature, and never so happy as when he had a bow between the fingers and thumb of his skilled right hand.

"It's very difficult. It's much more difficult than people would imagine," said Mr. Lethwaite, during a slight pause in the performance.

"I think you're rather in a hurry, do you

know," remarked third fiddle. "Now, if you'll count steadily on from this place—one, two, three, four, and then come in, I think it will be all right. Shall we try it again?"

"By all means," replied Mr. Lethwaite, letting one of his drumsticks fall upon the resounding parchment after a fashion which would have made a "surprise symphony" of any piece of music into which the ornament had been introduced. "By all means—now then."

"Wheen, squee, rhepe, twiddle," went the third violin.

"One, two, three, four," and "r-r-r-rap a tap a rap a tap a rap tap rap rap rap rap," chimed in the drum.

"Well, that's right enough," said the violin, encouragingly.

"Yes, I think that was better," remarked the other, and he went on again. "One, two, three, four. Won't you play the passage?"

"Oh yes, I beg your pardon. Where shall we begin?"

"Oh, the old place, one, two, three, four—I beg your pardon, weren't you a little slow?"

"No, I think not. The passage goes like this, you know, one, two, three, four. I was thinking *you* were a little fast, if you'll excuse me."

"Oh, by all means. Now we'll try it again."

"Wheep, squeen, wheen, twiddle," quoth the violin, once more whining with the most intense feeling.

"One, two, three, four, rattle tattle tattle tattle r-r-r-rap tap tap tap tap," urged the drum, with as much feeling as could be expected.

"How did you like that?" demanded the drum.

"A very little more will do it now," replied the fiddle. "But I think I would try another passage, if I were you. Here, for instance," he continued, after turning the leaves of the music-book over two or three times, "is a part where you come in at intervals, which is difficult."

"Difficult! I imagine it is difficult. You require to be as eagerly on the watch as if you were shooting pigeons out of a trap. I never thought," remarked Mr. Lethwaite, "that I should take so much trouble about anything."

"Well, if I were you, I'd stick to that part exclusively for a time. Suppose you try it over now."

"You're right," replied our artist on the drums; "we'll go at it at once."

"Are you ready?" asked the fiddle, bow in hand.

Mr. Lethwaite was so absorbed in readiness, with a drumstick in each hand, and his eyes fixed upon the score, that he could not speak. But he nodded an eager assent, and the other started off.

It certainly seemed to be a very difficult passage this. It was fitful and brilliant, full of change, and the pace, as the sporting phrase goes, terrific. The drums were wanted constantly, at very short intervals—a very rapid burst and no more. Then a flourishing bit for the fiddles, and then a bit of drum again. The effect, too, was rendered the more astounding in the present case because the third violin naturally and rightly did not play the main air, the melody of the piece, but only his own part, which played thus as a solo was altogether mysterious and inexplicable. Mr. Lethwaite actually perspired with the severity of the mental exercise in which he was engaged. His counting was so violent, that it resembled the puffing of a steam-engine. He was absolutely out of breath with his efforts to keep pace with his companion's flourishes.

"One, two, three, four—one, two, three, four—rap, tap—one, two—rap a tap, a tap, a tap—one, two, three, four—rap—one, two—rap a tap a rap a tap a r-r-r-r-ap tap, tap, tap, tap. Stop. What was that?"

"I think it was a knock at the door," replied third fiddle.

"One, two," Mr. Lethwaite was beginning, when the knock was repeated. "Come in," he called, and the servant came into the room.

"Mr. Goodrich is below, sir," said the man, "and wishes to speak with you very particular."

"Ask Mr. Goodrich to walk up," replied Lethwaite, beginning to count again. "We can go on just the same," he continued, addressing his companion; "it's only my clerk. Now then. One, two, three, four. Ah, Goodrich, how d'ye do? All right? One, two. I'll speak to you directly, if you'll sit down. Now, once more. One, two, three, four, rap, tap, rap a tap a tap, tap." And off they went again.

He had not noticed how pale the old clerk looked, nor observed that the expression of his face was changed and anxious.

"If you please, sir," said Jonathan, "I wished to speak——"

"Ah, yes; wait a bit though—rap, tap rap a tap a tap tap—one, two, three, four—rap a tap a tap."

"It's very particular."

"Yes, yes, I know. Now then, Scroop—one two." And off went Scroop, "wheep, squeen, twiddle diddle diddle diddle diddle," and the drums "rap, tap, rap a tap a rap a tap a rap tap tap tap tap tap."

"If you please, sir, interrupted Jonathan, eagerly, "it's most important."

"Yes, I know. It always is. One, two, three, four."

"I should take it as a great favour, sir——"

"One, two, three, four."

"Sir," said Jonathan Goodrich, coming forward and laying his hand on his employer's arm, "I *must* speak to you, and that at once."

Lethwaite turned suddenly round, and saw by the expression of his clerk's face that it really was something important which the old man had to communicate.

"Why, Jonathan, man," he said, "what's the matter?"

"Well, sir, I've come to tell you what's the matter, but——"

"But what?"

"Sir, I should be very sorry to say anything that might seem rude or unmannerly, but, but—might I ask the favour of speaking to you alone?"

"Oh, you needn't mind my friend; it's only Mr. Scroop."

The old clerk still hesitated. "In matters of business——" he began.

The third fiddle got up and proposed to go.

"Not a bit, not a bit," interposed the other; "we must practise all that over again before you go. Since I must be tormented about business, I'll get it over. Come into the dining-room, Jonathan." And suiting the action to the word, he led the way into an adjoining apartment, the old man following, and closing the door after him.

Mr. Scroop began to amuse himself with his violin. It is one of the privileges of musicians that they need never know ennui.

He "tried," as the fraternity say, all sorts of favourite bits over and over again on his instrument, with his head on one side, and frowning profoundly. He went from these to the study of his part in that very composition in which Mr. Lethwaite was also preparing to distinguish himself. Then he went off again to morsels of different classical composers, snatches of Bach, and glimpses of Mendelssohn, and finally he put down his instrument, and walked slowly about the room with his hands behind him, looking at the prints and photographs on the wall, and humming softly to himself all the time—a depressing occupation enough.

At last, when he was beginning to think that the hour had come when he might legitimately take up his hat and go, the door of the dining-room re-opened, and Mr. Lethwaite entered the room, followed by his clerk.

"My dear Scroop," he said, quite calmly, "I am perfectly overwhelmed with shame to think that you should have been left all this time alone, and that our important occupation should have been intercepted by so trivial a matter as the arrival of my clerk with his budget full of business. Now, Jonathan," he continued, addressing the old man, whose anxious and depressed appearance showed in wonderful contrast to the gallant bearing of his patron, "will you stop and hear a duet performed by Mr. Scroop and myself on two instruments seldom heard together alone, or are you bent on going back to that horrible place—the City?"

The old man shook his head. "I'd rather go back to-day, sir, with your permission." And with that he made his best bow, and retired, still with the same anxious countenance with which he had arrived.

"I would give a great deal," said Lethwaite, as soon as the door was closed, "to be able to believe in that old man as completely as I feel inclined to do. He is one of the few people who have borne the test of time—one of the few in whom I have been unable to detect anything unworthy even after years of intimate association. I almost wish that something might occur which might enable me to test his fidelity unmistakably."

"Perhaps something may," said Mr. Scroop, whose retorts were ever of the brilliant sort.

"Not unlikely—and now let's try the difficult bit again." And our imperturbable friend seized his drumsticks and commenced a brilliant flourish on his instrument.

And at it they went once more with renewed energy. Mr. Scroop's mind went at once into his violin, and wonderful results ensued, while Julius Lethwaite tried hard to get his mind into his drums, and rattled away with prodigious force, and sufficient regard to time, to satisfy even so good a musician as his present coadjutor. They went on for full half an hour more, the one whining and twiddling, and the other rattling and thumping, till at last the third fiddle discovered that it was time for him to go, as he had promised to "try" something else, with somebody else, in the course of that same afternoon.

"Have you any idea," asked Mr. Lethwaite, as the third violin was on the point of departing, "have you any idea, as to what is the salary of 'the drum,' in a good orchestra?"

"I should think about from two to three guineas a week," replied Mr. Scroop, "but I am not sure."

"As much as that," said our friend, quietly.

"Oh, I should think, at least," answered the other. "Have you any idea of applying for the post?" he added, smiling.

"More unlikely things have happened."

"Very well, I'll make inquiry," quoth the other, still smiling. And with that he got up to go, thinking what a good joke it was. The luxurious Mr. Lethwaite drumming in an orchestra for a living. "I can see you," he said, "coming through the little door under the stage, wiping your mouth after having partaken of a pint of porter."

Mr. Scroop took his leave, still smiling at this conceit, and made off to keep his appointment. As he descended the stairs on his way to the street he could hear his musical friend still drumming away with prodigious energy. The sounds were audible even in the street, and as long as the third fiddle remained within range they did not cease for so much as a single instant.

LONDON IN BOOKS.

When I think over the past history of this enormous metropolis, I seem to be present at some grand drama, in which the actors are kings, queens, princes, nobles, prelates, wits, poets, philosophers, statesmen, soldiers; the great and the little, the good and the wicked, the happy and the unfortunate, the wise and the foolish; men and women who have really lived and died, enjoyed and suffered, triumphed or fallen, in the very localities where I go about my daily work, or even in some of the actual buildings which I still behold. The early scenes of that drama are in fairy-land. I see fabulous Brutus and his Trojans landing in ancient Britain, conquering giants, winning their way to the fair river which we now call Thames, and founding on its banks a city which, in its name and its traditions, should preserve the memory of vanished Troy:

And Troynovant was built of old Troy's ashes cold.

Then, entering the historic period, I find this London of ours a Roman city, stately with temples to all the gods and goddesses of Heathendom—a city where the mailed legions of the Cæsars paced sternly on the ramparts, and held the native savages in awe within the walls, or drove them forth into the outer marshes. The scene shifting again, I behold the narrow streets of Saxon London, with their relics of Roman splendour lurking among the rude timber houses of the Northmen. That, in its turn, gives place to the mediæval town—a wild, beautiful dream of richly-carved and ornamented houses, looking out between clustering trees; of pinnacled cathedrals and churches; of palaces and mansions; of streets crowded with grave merchants and gay 'prentices, and flashing with the brightly-coloured processions of chivalry. Passing on into later times, as the great drama unfolds itself, I find myself in the gallant ruffling London of Shakespeare's day, and of the age immediately succeeding: which I watch with my mind's eye until I see it darken under the gloom of Puritanism; spring forth again into the glow and revelry of the Restoration; become ghastly at the livid touch of the Plague; sink, with a crash, and tumult, and toppling of ancient towers, into the red and roaring abyss of the Great Fire; rise once more into power beneath the creative genius of Sir Christopher Wren; take its noble stand for Liberty in the days of 1688; sparkle in the witty levity of the reigns of Anne and of the first two Georges; and so pass through various moods into the metropolis of our own times. Such are the chief phases of our London drama—a drama extending over nearly two thousand years; and what a wealth of life, action, and passion fills up the scenes! What tenderness of love, and rage of terror; what beatings of hot blood, long stilled in death; what plots and conspiracies, hatched secretly, or suddenly exploding in wrath and flame; what revolutions, making kings and unmaking them; what crimes, private and public, leaving a stain of blood behind; what wrestling of individual man with overwhelming circumstance; what summer blossoming of genius, often from roots of bitterness, and out of dusky places; what roystering in taverns, and dalliance in palaces; what mysteries of death, and dim suggestions of the something after death; what joys, what agonies, what despair!

Of all the cities of the modern world, none can equal London and Paris for their vast, manifold, and prolonged accumulation of human experiences; and to the Englishman London is necessarily the more interesting of the two. To the bookish man, this sombre, prosaic London is a territory of romance. For him the treasured memories of the past remain for ever. For him, the Arab maiden who married Thomas à Becket's father still walks through the alien streets, after her weary voyage from the Holy Land, crying, "Gilbert, Gilbert!" Jane Shore does penance in the public ways, and Charles the Second talks with Nelly in the Mall. Raleigh sits in the Tower a prisoner, writing his History of the World. The fires are alight in Smithfield, and Charles the First steps out of that fatal window at Whitehall upon the scaffold which his own obstinate and untruthful nature had prepared for him. Shakespeare acts again at the Bankside, and the nine-and-twenty pilgrims set out from the Tabard on that April morning. Chaucer beats a friar in Fleet-street: occasion of said beating unknown, but doubtless impertinence on the part of the friar. The poets gather about the throne of Ben, at the Mermaid or the Devil. Rochester dispenses quack medicines as an Italian mountebank in Tower-street. The wits of the succeeding generation flutter in the coffee-houses. Lillie the perfumer sells the Tatler at that corner of Beaufort-buildings and the Strand where once more we find the sale of perfumes, but no Tatler. Pope takes the water for Twickenham; Addison writes the forthcoming Spectator, with the help of a bottle of wine placed at each end of the long room at Holland House; Steele jests, writes love-letters to his wife, and drinks, in defiance of the bailiffs; the bucks and bloods and maccaronies sport their velvets and their lace, their flowing wigs and their gold-hilted swords, at Ranelagh and Vauxhall; and Johnson—vast, burly, and awful—dominates in Fleet-street, or, clinging to a post by Temple-bar, wakes the echoes of St. Clement Danes with sudden midnight laughter.

It is lucky, in these days of continual change—of metropolitan railways plunging through streets and squares, and knocking whole neighbourhoods to pieces; of gigantic hotels swallowing up a score or so of old houses—that there are industrious compilers who preserve for us the records of the past. Old London will soon exist only in books, excepting for a few such buildings as Westminster Abbey and Westminster Hall. "London in Books," therefore, is every day becoming more and more interesting. I, for one, am grateful for all collections which enable me to realise what this vast city was, in times long gone by—times distinguished from our own by many differences of manners, of morals, and of architecture.

One of the pleasantest works of this kind with which the public have recently been favoured, is the Romance of London, by Mr. John Timbs—three volumes of "strange stories, scenes, and remarkable persons of the great town." Mr. Timbs has already published a book, under the title of Curiosities of London (1855); but that is more purely antiquarian in its character—this, more light and entertaining. The work through which I now propose to scamper is as charming a miscellany for "dipping into" at leisure moments as any that could be named. It is a compilation, certainly; but a good compilation gives us the wit of many men compacted. This collection of the Romance of London contains the quintessence of a whole circulating library of novels, historical and domestic. Open it anywhere, and you find some

strange story of old times—some fact or some tradition with which you are glad to make acquaintance, or to renew your acquaintance if it be an old friend. London has been a famous ground for strange adventures during more centuries than one could count upon the fingers of both hands; and Mr. Timbs tells them in a manner brief, intelligible, and sufficing.

When next the reader goes over London Bridge, and looks at the beautiful church of St. Mary Overies, let him think of the miserly ferryman and his lovely daughter who plied there in the remote Anglo-Saxon times. In those ages, there was no bridge over the Thames, and old John Overs, who ferried people across from the city of London to the borough of Southwark, prospered at a great rate. John rented the ferry of the City; but so many people crossed from side to side, together with horses, cattle, and market produce, that he made a very large profit by his work, and, waxing rich, put out his money at usurious interest, and so waxed richer. In time (according to the old tract in the British Museum from which Mr. Timbs quotes) he acquired an estate equal to that of the best alderman in London; but he always lived in abject poverty, though, for purposes of business, he kept several servants and apprentices. He had an only daughter, beautiful and pious, whom he took care to have liberally educated, but "at the cheapest rate." When, however, she grew of age to marry, "he would suffer no man, of what condition or quality soever, by his good will, to have any sight of her, much less access to her." Of course, all his fine precautions were in vain. You may shut up Danae in a brazen tower, but Jupiter will find his way in somehow. The Jupiter of this particular legend was a young gallant, who certainly did not effect his entrance into the maiden's bower in a rain of gold, for he seems to have rather sought that commodity than to have brought it with him; but who managed in some way to obtain three interviews with Danae while her father was rowing to and fro on the river. Finally, a match was agreed on; but an unlooked-for circumstance prevented the desired nuptials. Old John took it into his miserly head that he could save something worth having, by starving himself and all his household for a day; he therefore feigned to be dead, and caused his daughter (who reluctantly consented to the trick) to wrap him in a sheet, and lay him out in his own chamber, with a taper burning at his head, and another at his feet, as the manner then was. He took it for granted that all the people in his house would fast during the whole day, in sorrow at the event; but, watching narrowly from his sheet, he was horrified to find that everybody sang and danced for joy, and, breaking into the larder, began feasting without check. He bore it as long as he could without moving; but at length the agony of seeing so much waste going on about him became greater than he could endure, and, says the tract, "stirring and struggling in his sheet, like a ghost with a candle in each hand, he purposed to rise up and rate 'em for their sauciness and boldness; when one of them, thinking that the devil was about to rise in his likeness, being in a great amaze, catched hold of the butt-end of a broken oar which was in the chamber, and, being a sturdy knave, thinking to kill the devil at the first blow, actually struck out his brains." The sturdy knave was afterwards tried for murder, but acquitted, doubtless to the satisfaction of all reasonable men. The ferryman's daughter inherited the old man's estate; and the lover, hearing of the news in the country, where he then was, posted up to London as hard as he could, but on the way was thrown from his horse, and broke his neck. The body of Overs the ferryman was denied Christian interment, on account of his extortions and usury; and when the friars of Bermondsey Abbey consented, for a money consideration, to give a little earth for the reception of the remains, the abbot, who was away at the time, no sooner learnt the fact on his return, than he caused the body to be taken up, and put on the back of an ass, which was then turned out of the abbey gates, the abbot praying that the beast might carry the corpse of the old usurer to such place as he would best deserve to be buried in. The ass thereupon paced solemnly along Kent-street, and so to a certain pond which was then the common place of execution, and there he shook off his burden immediately beneath the gibbet, and the body was put under the ground without any kind of ceremony. These lamentable events seem to have permanently shadowed the spirits of fair Mary Overs, and to have turned her thoughts from this world to the next; for she first dedicated her wealth to the building of the church of St. Mary Overies (so called after her), and then retired into a convent. In the church, a monumental effigy represents a skeleton in a shroud; but the name given to the ferryman in connexion with this figure is Audery, not John Overs, and the workmanship is said to be of the fifteenth century.

A different story is told of the original of the effigy; namely, that he was a fanatic who attempted to fast forty days in imitation of Christ, and who died in the attempt. There are many such effigies in other churches.

I will next filch from Mr. Timbs's repertory a narrative of a murder, and of the strange way in which it was discovered after many years. Dr. Airy, provost of King's College, Oxford, from 1599 to 1616, was one day passing with his servant through St. Sepulchre's Churchyard, London, while the sexton was making a grave, when he observed a skull move. The sexton examined it, and found a toad inside, but remarked that a tenpenny nail was stuck in the temple-bone. The doctor, inferring from this fact that the possessor of the skull had been murdered, asked the sexton if he remembered whose skull it was, and was told that it was that of a man who had died suddenly two-and-twenty years before. Dr. Airy advised that the matter should be inquired into; and the sexton, after his departure, thinking

much over the circumstances attending the man's death, recollected that the deceased's wife, then alive, and married to another person, had been seen to go into her first husband's chamber with a nail and hammer. Accordingly, he went to a justice of the peace and told him the story, together with his discovery of the nail in the skull. The wife being sent for, witnesses came forward, who testified to various suspicious circumstances; and the woman, being confounded by the discovery of her guilt, confessed, and was hanged. It will be observed that this incident took place during the life of Shakespeare, and it may have suggested to him that passage in Macbeth:

It will have blood; they say, blood will have blood;
Stones have been known to move, and trees to speak;
Augurs, and understood relations, have
By magot-pies, and choughs, and rooks, brought forth
The secret'st man of blood.

Also, the very similar lines in Hamlet:

For murder, though it have no tongue, will speak
With most miraculous organ.

Equally remarkable was the discovery, during the protectorate of Richard Cromwell, of the murder of Mr. Fussell, by Major Strangeways—a story which was related at full in No. 182 of this Journal. The means of discovery in that case was a gun which one of the jurymen at the inquest had lent to the major, and which he recognised by certain marks on seeing it again. Here, also, the murderer confessed his crime, on finding so strange and unexpected a piece of evidence suddenly confronting him. Mr. Timbs seems to have overlooked this striking story, though in his account of criminals pressed to death for not pleading, he mentions Strangeways as having so suffered. It appears that there are records of this atrocious torture as late as the year 1770.

Of course Mr. Timbs tells the story of George Barnwell and the fair and free Mrs. Millwood—though there seems to be great doubt whether the legend was originally a London legend at all, the scene of the crime being laid by the old ballad in Percy's Reliques at Ludlow, in Shropshire. It was apparently Lillo, the writer of the celebrated tragedy, who transferred the locality to Camberwell and Shoreditch, and ever since then the story has been identified with the metropolis, though even in the ballad Barnwell is spoken of as a London apprentice, who committed his great crime far away in the country. Some difference of opinion, however, seems to exist among the various writers on the subject as to which is the correct account, and the period when Barnwell lived has been referred to the reigns both of Queen Elizabeth and Queen Anne. Though Lillo's play is now seldom or never performed, it was customary, even up to a recent date, to act it at Covent Garden and Drury Lane on "Boxing Night" and Easter Monday, as a moral lesson to the young shopmen and apprentices who were supposed to be present at the theatres in strong force on those two occasions. Dr. Barrowby, physician to St. Bartholomew's Hospital, used to relate he was once sent for by a young gentleman in Great St. Helen's, apprentice to a merchant in a large way of business. He was very ill. The nurse had observed that he frequently sighed profoundly, and she told the doctor she was sure that something lay on his mind. Dr. Barrowby accordingly sent every one out of the room, and earnestly solicited the young man to inform him what oppressed his mind so much, assuring him that unless his spirits could be relieved, no medicine could possibly do him any good. The youth confessed that something did indeed lie very heavy at his heart, but that he would sooner die than divulge it, as it would be his ruin if known. The doctor, however, by kindness of manner, and protesting his desire to serve, and not betray, his patient, persuaded him to relate the circumstances which distressed him. It appeared that he was the second son of a gentleman of good fortune in Hertfordshire; that he had got into an intrigue with the mistress of the captain of an Indiaman then abroad; and had misappropriated cash, drafts, and notes, to the amount of two hundred pounds, belonging to his employer; and that a few nights before, at Drury Lane Theatre, he had been so moved by the performance of Ross and Mrs. Pritchard in the parts of George Barnwell and Mrs. Millwood, that he had not had a moment's peace since, and had wished to die, to avoid the shame hanging over him. The kind-hearted doctor, on hearing that the young man's father had been written for, and was expected every minute, bade his patient make himself perfectly easy, as he would undertake that his father should supply the money, or, if there were any hesitation on the part of that gentleman, that he, the doctor, would provide it himself. The father shortly afterwards arrived, and, on being privately informed of the cause of his son's illness, said, with many thanks to the doctor, that he would at once go to his banker's and get the cash. On communicating this joyful intelligence to the young fellow, the doctor found that his pulse, without the administration of any medicine, was greatly improved; he rapidly recovered, and in subsequent years became an eminent merchant. "Dr. Barrowby," continues Ross, writing to a friend, "never told me the name, but the story he mentioned in the green-room of Drury Lane Theatre; and after telling it one night, when I was standing by, he said to me: 'You have done some good in your profession—more, perhaps, than many a clergyman who preached last Sunday;' for the patient told the doctor that the play raised such horror and contrition in his soul, that he would, if it would please God to raise a friend to extricate him out of that distress, dedicate the rest of his life to religion and virtue. Though I never knew his name, or saw him, to my knowledge, I had, for

nine or ten years, at my benefit, a note sealed up, with ten guineas, and these words: 'A tribute of gratitude from one who was highly obliged, and saved from ruin, by seeing Mr. Ross's performance of Barnwell.'" Romantic as this story sounds, there is no reason for disbelieving it. A very similar incident occurred, two or three years ago, to a young man whose conscience was awakened by seeing Mr. Tom Taylor's Ticket-of-Leave Man at the Olympic Theatre, and who thereupon returned a portion of some money he had embezzled. Hamlet was right. "The play's the thing" with which to touch the conscience of a great many people.

I have heard
That guilty creatures, sitting at a play,
Have by the very cunning of the scene
Been struck so to the soul, that presently
They have proclaimed their malefactions.

One of the wildest of London legends is that having reference to "the Field of Forty Footsteps." The neighbourhood of Bloomsbury is not externally suggestive of romantic, shadowy, or grim associations. Its formal streets and squares, and its heavy brick mansions, are prosaic in the extreme; yet a strange tradition is connected with the ground on which now stand the streets to the east of the northern end of Tottenham-court-road. In the rear of Montague House, which occupied the site of the British Museum—and was, in fact, the edifice in which the Museum was first established—lay a great stretch of land, not built over until the commencement of the present century. The house and gardens occupied seven acres, and the latter were laid out in grass-terraces, flower-borders, lawns, and gravel-walks, and were open to Paddington westward, to Primrose-hill, Hampstead, and Highgate, northward, and eastward to Battle-bridge, Islington, and Pancras. Aubrey relates that at midnight, on St. John the Baptist's Day, 1694, he saw twenty-three young women in the parterre behind Montague House, looking for a coal under the root of a plantain, to put under their pillows, that they might dream of their future husbands. In 1780, the troops hastily brought up to London to quell the Gordon riots, were quartered there, the house having at that time become the depository of the national scientific and art treasures, and being, therefore, government property. To the north of the grounds of Montague House were certain fields, called the Long Fields, and afterwards Southampton Fields. Up to 1800, when the land was covered with houses, these fields were the resort of depraved characters, who fought pitched battles there, especially on Sundays; and there it was that the famous duel occurred which gave to one particular field the name of "the Field of Forty Footsteps." According to the story, two brothers, in the reign of James the Second, about the period of the Duke of Monmouth's rebellion (1685), fell in love with the same lady, and, being equally unwilling to give her up, and the fair one declining to express a preference for either, determined to decide the matter by mortal conflict in the fields at the back of Montague House. The combat, which was prolonged and ferocious, and which was rendered still more horrible by the lady looking on, ended in the death of both brothers; and the footsteps made by them in advancing and receding were said to be ineffaceable. They were forty in number, and it was alleged that no grass would grow over them, and that even if the ground was ploughed up the fatal impressions were sure to reappear. Southey, who visited the field a little before it was covered, says that the place where the brothers are supposed to have fallen dead was still bare of grass, and that a labourer who directed him to the spot also pointed out a bank where the lady who was the cause of the fratricidal struggle sat to see the combat. It seems that Southey fully believed in the supernatural character of the footprints. He had been recommended by a friend to examine them, as being "wonderful marks of the Lord's hatred to duelling." The field in which they were to be seen, he describes as about three-quarters of a mile north of Montague House, and five hundred yards east of Tottenham-court-road. "The steps," says Southey, "are of the size of a large human foot, about three inches deep, and lie nearly from north-east to south-west. We counted *only* seventy-six; but we were not exact in counting." Southey appears to have been unaware that the legend speaks of no more than forty. This throws great doubt on the story, and renders it highly probable that the marks, as suggested by another writer, were caused, or at least perpetuated, by the throngs of persons constantly visiting the field. The legend, however, is a very striking one, and was made the subject of a romance by Miss Jane Porter, and also of a melodrama performed several years ago at the Tottenham-street Theatre—lately the Queen's, and now the Prince of Wales's, and a charming and admirably constructed little theatre.

One of the most famous duellists of the present century was the profligate and riotous peer, Lord Camelford. He was not only a duellist, but a boxer, and a wild fellow upon town, notorious for his encounters with watchmen, and for his universal pugnacity towards high and low. He was a veritable representative of the Mohocks of a century earlier. In 1799, he savagely assaulted and wounded a gentleman in a riot at Drury Lane Theatre. Soon afterwards, he headed an attack on four "Charleys" in Cavendish-square, and maintained the struggle for an hour, when he and his associates were carried off, guarded by twenty armed watchmen. At the general peace of 1801, he came into collision with the mob, because he refused to light up his apartments in New Bond-street. He had a regular pugilistic encounter with a naval lieutenant in the lobby of the Royal Circus (now the Surrey Theatre), owing to the lieutenant having knocked off his hat, which he had neglected to remove when God save the King was being sung; and he became so great

a terror to the town, that when a foppish young fellow, who had had some sort of encounter with him in a coffee-house, learnt from the waiter who the stranger was, he speedily subsided from his vapouring into a tone of extreme terror, and stole out of the place, leaving the wine he had ordered, untasted. It was after the encounter at the Circus, that James and Horace Smith, who had seen the provocation his lordship had really received, called on him to say that they were ready to testify to that fact in any legal proceedings that might be taken. They found the mantelpiece adorned with bludgeons, horsewhips, and other weapons of offence; and the noble lord, who received them with great cordiality, expressed his gratitude in a very characteristic manner. "All I can say in return is this," he exclaimed. "If ever I see you engaged in a row, upon my soul I'll stand by you." Not very long afterwards, his violent career came to a violent close. He got into a quarrel with one Captain Best, about a woman of notoriously bad character, and a meeting was arranged to take place the following morning in the fields behind Holland House. Best, who was his old friend, frequently endeavoured to come to an amicable understanding with him; but the other pertinaciously refused. The encounter resulted in Lord Camelford being mortally wounded. He was carried to Little Holland House, not far off, and there, after three days' suffering, he expired. With all his ruffianism, there must have been something generous in his nature, for, after he had fallen, he took the captain by the hand, and said, "Best, I am a dead man; you have killed me, but I freely forgive you;" and he reproved some labourers who ran to the spot, for endeavouring to stop his adversary, saying that he himself was the aggressor. Best had the reputation of being the first shot in England; and, though Lord Camelford knew himself to be in the wrong, he had refused to retract, fearing the imputation of cowardice. The scruple was mere vanity; but it serves to illustrate the half-insane character of the man. This was in 1804. Little Holland House still lurks coyly behind its muffling trees up a green lane at the side of Holland Park; but the fields at the back of the older mansion have long been built over.

Mr. Timbs relates a singular story of recovery from death. A youth of seventeen was found guilty in 1740 of a criminal assault, and was hanged at Tyburn. After remaining suspended for two-and-twenty minutes, he was cut down, and taken to Surgeons' Hall, that the body might be dissected. On being laid on the table, however, he was heard to groan; he was thereupon bled, and after a while was able to rear himself up, though at first he could not speak articulately. The sheriffs were then communicated with; but, the news having spread abroad, so great a mob collected about the Hall that the sheriffs were afraid to take the wretched creature back to Tyburn, and again hang him, as, with the customary hardness of those times, they seemed well disposed to do. They accordingly kept him at the Hall till midnight, when, all being quiet, he was recommitted to Newgate. Two days afterwards he was reported to be "fully recovered in health and senses;" but all recollection of his execution, or even of his trial, had gone—a fact partly accounted for by his having been in a state of fever and delirium ever since his original commitment to prison. To this fact also, was attributed his extraordinary escape from death. Being unconscious at the time of his execution, and therefore having no fear, his blood, it is thought, circulated with greater quickness and force than it would otherwise have done, and thus saved him from suffocation. It appears that the lad was ultimately transported for life. There are several stories extant of recovery from seeming death—sometimes under the very knife of the anatomist. One of the strangest is that of a man in Ireland who was hanged for sheep-stealing, and who "came to life again" in the hands of a medical operator. The latter had the good feeling not to give information to the authorities, and the malefactor, by a strange application of logic, used afterwards to force the doctor to support him, saying he was bound to continue that life which he had restored, and threatening that, if he did not, he, the culprit, would give the authorities information of his own escape from death, and of the medical man's complicity in that evasion of the law. The friends of Dr. Dodd, the clerical forger, hoped to be equally successful with him. The body was conveyed to the house of an undertaker in Goodge-street, Tottenham-court-road, where no less a man than John Hunter was waiting to see what could be done; but the criminal had been almost in a state of collapse when he mounted the scaffold, and what little life there was then in him could not resist the stricture of the rope. At the undertaker's, he was placed in a hot-bath, and every exertion was made to save him, but in vain. A great deal of time had been lost, through the pressure of the crowd, but it would probably have been a hopeless attempt in any case.

A good many supernatural stories are told in these volumes. St. Paul's Cathedral is associated with a strange delusion, of which an account is given by Dr. Arnould, of Camberwell, who had charge of the gentleman suffering from it. He stated that one afternoon, while looking in at a print-shop window in St. Paul's Churchyard, he was addressed by an elderly gentleman, who, after chatting about Sir Christopher Wren, proposed that they should dine together, and then ascend the cathedral; that he consented, and that, having entered the ball just below the cross, and being quite alone, the elderly gentleman pulled out of his pocket something like a compass, with curious figures round the edges, and placed it in the centre of the ball. His companion then felt a great trembling and horror come over him, which was increased by the mysterious person asking if he would like to see any relative? He said he would like to see his father, and a vision of his parent was at once presented him in a mirror. Overcome with

fear, and feeling very ill, he begged to be allowed to descend, and the stranger, in parting from him under the northern portico, said, "Remember! you are the slave of the man of the mirror!" When he afterwards consulted Dr. Arnould, he was completely possessed with the idea that this diabolical old gentleman had entire command over him, could see him at every minute of the day, hear all he said, and read his inmost thoughts. "In some part of the building which we passed in coming away," said the sufferer to his medical adviser, "he showed me what he called a great bell, and I heard sounds which came from it, and which went to it; sounds of laughter, and of anger, and of pain: there was a dreadful confusion of sounds, and, as I listened with wonder and affright, he said, 'This is my organ of hearing; this great bell is in communication with all other bells within the circle of hieroglyphics, by which every word spoken by those under my control is made audible to me.'" The poor man was of course insane. He was sent to a private asylum, and in about two years was discharged in good mental health. His delusion was full of a grimly fantastic spirit, but it had one element of the ludicrous. The unfortunate gentleman said that the enchanter's hieroglyphics consisted of the words "Day and Martin" and "Warren's Blacking," and that these, inscribed on walls and palings, marked the limits of his dominions.

The Tower is the most haunted ground in London, and it would be strange if it were not, remembering the tragedies that were acted there during many successive centuries. An old tradition affirms that the mortar used in the original construction was tempered with the blood of wild beasts; and certainly a bloody spirit seems to have brooded heavily over the old building throughout the dark ages, and even as late as the time of the Second Pretender, if we may not say up to 1820, in which year Arthur Thistlewood, of the Cato-street conspiracy, was imprisoned in the Tower, previous to being hanged at the Old Bailey. Not only have many miserable wretches lain within those walls, eating their hearts in despair until they have been taken out on to the scaffold and beheaded, but a list of six persons secretly murdered there—beginning with Henry VI., and ending with Arthur Capel, Earl of Essex (1638)—may be derived from its annals. The gloomy old fortress, with its Bloody Tower and its Traitors' Gate, ought to be, and is, the stronghold of ghosts. It is believed by some that the spirit of Raleigh yet glides about the place; and a chamber in the Bloody Tower, the walls of which are adorned with paintings representing men put to the torture, is said to be permanently haunted. Recently, Mr. Edward Lenthal Swifte, formerly keeper of the crown jewels in the Tower, has put forth an extraordinary narrative of an appearance which he saw in the Jewel House in the year 1817. One night in October, about twelve o'clock, as he, his wife, their little boy, and his wife's sister, were sitting at supper, his wife, when about to drink a glass of wine-and-water, suddenly exclaimed, "Good God! What is that?" Mr. Swifte looked up, and saw a cylindrical figure, like a glass tube, seemingly about the thickness of his arm, hovering between the ceiling and the table. It appeared to be filled with a dense fluid, white and pale azure, incessantly rolling and mingling within the cylinder. In about two minutes it moved towards Mrs. Swifte's sister, then passed before the boy and Mr. Swifte, and ultimately floated behind Mrs. Swifte, who instantly crouched down, covered her shoulders with both hands, and exclaimed, in the utmost terror, "Oh, Christ! It has seized me!" Mr. Swifte caught up his chair, and struck at the wainscot behind her; then rushed up-stairs into the children's room, and told the nurse what he had seen. The phantom had previously crossed the upper end of the table, and disappeared. The strangest part of the business is, that neither the sister-in-law nor the boy saw anything of this appearance. Mr. Swifte says he is bound to state that, shortly before the event, some young lady residents in the Tower had been suspected of making phantasmagorial experiments at their windows; but he alleges that those windows did not command any in his dwelling, and on the night in question the doors were all closed, and heavy dark cloth curtains were let down over the casements. The only light in the room was that of two candles on the table. Very shortly after this strange affair, one of the night sentries at the Jewel Office was alarmed by the figure of a huge bear issuing from underneath the door; he thrust at it with his bayonet, which stuck in the door, and he then dropped in a fit, and in two or three days died. The sergeant declared that such appearances were not uncommon. The sentry, it is alleged, was not asleep nor drunk at the time; but he may have been on the eve of a fit from natural causes, and the vision may have been the result of his state of health. Mr. Swifte's vision is more difficult to account for, from the fact of its having been seen by two of the persons present, and not by the two others; yet one cannot very well give a supernatural interpretation to so absurd and purposeless an appearance.

NO FOLLOWERS.

What's the hardest of all things to follow?
An ostrich, I'm told, tries our mettle;
But there's something that beats that quite hollow,
As, in singing, a lark beats a kettle.

A chamois, they say, 's not a trifle
In steep Alpine passes to follow,
But a chamois you'll "down" with a rifle,
There's that beats the chamois quite hollow.

A fox is a puzzle sometimes,
That baffles the best in a chase;
Or, sound-led by far-away chimes,
One wanders a wearisome pace.

A lady's a hard thing to follow,
Coquettish and full of vagaries,
Who feeds you with snubs, hard to swallow,
And acts by "the rule of contraries."

To follow professional starving,
Is very hard following, I guess,
Yet harder than mere want of carving
Is the thing on your notice I press.

To follow a Nimrod is hard,
When plashing through puddles you spank it;
Or to follow a lead, when the card
Is not in your hand—the deuce thank it.

And I've heard that a flea in a blanket
Is a very hard matter to follow;
And very hard driving they rank it
A certain brute given to wallow.

'Tis hard 'hind a huge van to ride
In a Hansom, stuck fast till you swear,
In the midst of a jam in Cheapside,
While you're anxious to reach Grosv'nor-square.

I know many hard things to do:
'Tis hard, when you're wrong'd, to say "thankee,"
'Tis hard to bamboozle a Jew—
But very much harder, a Yankee.

And hard 'tis to take up your bills
Without money; and hard to get credit
When your failure the newspapers fills,
And all your acquaintance have read it.

'Tis then hard to follow, I grant,
The remains of a wealthy relation,
Who has left his "own people" in want,
And his millions has willed to the nation.

But I see you are wearied with guessing,
I'll tell you what 'tis and be done,
Perplexity's always distressing,
So here is the answer my son:

Of all things we know, great or small,
In sea or in air, hill or hollow,
On this-here terrestrial ball,
Good advice is the hardest to follow.

BACK TO SCOTLAND.

I WONDER how long the facetious cockney will go on making jokes about the Scotchman's aversion to going back to his native land! This sharp sauce has been kept now for nearly three centuries, and it is as pungent and hot i' the mouth as when it was first bottled in the English vials of wrath. We have sunk many differences, forgotten many animosities, buried deep in oblivion many bones of contention which have long since crumbled to dust; but this taunt is still ready on our tongues even after all sense of its truth and applicability has faded from our minds. Nothing seems to last so long as a national prejudice, especially when it finds expression in a popular witticism. When our enemies or rivals are concerned, we are apt to love a joke better than the truth, and often to sacrifice truth to the petty purpose of raising a laugh. I wonder how many centuries of opportunity the world has lost through joking! Look back to Italy in the fifteenth century, and note how the seeds of political and social disunion were sown in that country by the Pasquinaders. Venice made jokes at the expense of Naples, Naples at the expense of Rome, Rome at the expense of Milan. A score of states and districts in Italy were kept apart by the habit of ridiculing each other's provincialisms. The empire of the Cæsars was split into parishes by the laughter excited by village wits. Grand-duchies and duchies, with their petty princes and paltry pretensions, were the results of this badinage, and all the might of France has not been able to bind up the bundle of sticks which was thus shaken asunder. How long have feelings of jealousy and hatred been sustained between England and France by facetious recriminations, by senseless jokes, and extravagant caricatures. What were the sort of notions that so long estranged us? That Frenchmen were frog-eating foreigners, poor, half-starved despicable creatures, who could not stand up before an Englishman for a moment. Did we not boast that our Englishman could thrash three Frenchmen any day? The idea of a Frenchman managing a ship, or training a race-horse, sent us into convulsions of laughter. Then, from the other side, John Bull was viewed as a big fat beast, who swore loudly and drank deeply, and sold his wife at Smithfield. We held these notions, and held them so long, because we studied each other in the pages of the caricaturists. Even now, when the French have an iron-clad fleet equal to our own, and a horse from France has won the highest honours of the English turf, the idea still lingers that a Frenchman is a ridiculous person, to be laughed at, and caricatured, and despised.

Among the wrongs which England has inflicted upon Ireland, may be reckoned the jokes which have been coined and passed into currency at the expense of poor Paddy. How few of us know anything of the serious aspects of Irish life; how few of us have been across the Channel to see the country and the people for ourselves? Who ever reads the history of Ireland? We get our ideas of Irishmen from collections of Irish bulls, from newspaper paragraphs about evictions and the shooting of landlords, from jig dancers at music-halls, and from pathetic stage peasants in frieze bobtail coats and caved-in hats, who twirl shillelaghs and shout "hurroo!" We have joked about Paddy until we regard him entirely as a comic person, addicted to poteen, potatoes, and sedition. Pat will come from Cork with his coat buttoned behind to the end of the chapter; and I am sure if he were to appear with his coat buttoned before, we should all be much disappointed, and refuse to recognise him.

Scotland can well afford to be joked about. She is apt to say, "Let those laugh who win." With her armour of thistles and self-esteem she is proof against the petty shafts of aimless ridicule. One good reason for her self-complacency, is the fact that those petty shafts go very wide of the mark. We cannot admit this joke about our steps being always turned towards England, and never going back, into our heads, because we are a matter of fact people; and the matter of fact is simply this—hear it ye Saxon jokers—that there are more Englishmen in Scotland than there are Scotchmen in

England! If you want proof of this, consult the returns of the last census. Then, as to going back. There are no people on the face of the earth so attached to their native country, or so anxious to end their days among their own kith and kin, as the Scotch. Every day of the year Scotchmen are coming back from foreign climes to enjoy the fruits of their enterprise amid the scenes of their youth. You meet with instances of this in every town and village, on every hill-side, on the borders of every loved river and lake. A handsome villa stands yonder among the fir-trees. Who owns it? "Oh, that belongs to Sandy Macpherson, who went to India, or America, or Australia, or where not, and made a fortune. He came back the other year and bought the land there and built that house, and made all his relations ladies and gentlemen as far as siller could make them." True, a Scotchman is not apt to go back until he has made his money. He is too proud for that. He went away a poor laddie to seek his fortune, and he does not like to return unless he has fulfilled his ambition. I lately visited the spot where General Brown was gathered to his humble Scottish fathers. All round about was a handsome suburb of villas and mansions peopled by Scotchmen who had "gone back." I met one who had been away in Mexico for nigh forty years, and the native Doric was as strong on his tongue as on that of any laddie who had never left the spot. His talk was all of the old days, and the friends and companions of his youth. In yon old house he had spent many a happy night; in yonder stream he had fished for trout;—how often had he fished there in his dreams far away in Mexico, sleeping at the bottom of a mine!—he remembered the number on the pew door opposite his old seat in church. He had not seen it for forty years; but it was 32, and the tail of the 2 turned up like a rabbit's. Yes, there it was. It had been renewed, possibly, but the quaint character of the figures was still preserved. He remembered everything; the inscriptions on the tombstones, and the ways and sayings of those who lay still and dumb under them. The forty years of his striving Mexican life and its triumphs had almost faded from his memory, and the life of his boyhood was joined on to that of his old age, and his Scotch habits, feelings, and sympathies were come back to him in all their original simplicity. No, my Saxon friend, your joke is neither true nor well found. A Scotchman loves to go back, and the dearest ambition of his heart is never fulfilled until circumstances permit him to return to the land of his birth with honour to himself and advantage to his kith and kin. Why he is so ready to leave it in the first instance should be obvious to every one who has travelled for days and days in the Highlands and seen nothing but bare rocks and barren hill-sides. Not even a Scotchman can live upon moss and heather; and would you have him lie down and die among the rocks while there are fresh fields and pastures new inviting him to the sunny south? Scotland is but a birthplace, and the inheritance of her children is necessity.

With this preface, I proceed to relate how I, a Scotchman, recently went back. It was so delightful an expedition to me that I am tempted to think some account of it may not be uninteresting to others. I cannot hope that any Englishman will fully credit what I say, when I declare that my feeling, on quitting my adopted home in the sunny south, and setting out for my native hills in the cold north, was one of delirious joy. Well, let me humour any incredulity of this kind by confessing that my feeling on quitting my native hills to come south, was exactly of the same nature. It was not that I was rejoiced to leave Scotland, but that I was eager to see England. So, it was not that I was rejoiced to leave England, but that I was eager to revisit Scotland.

How exhilarating the air was that morning! What deep draughts I took of it, and how intoxicated I was! As I rolled away from my door in a cab, to take ship at Wapping, I cast Care from my shoulders, as a frisky young colt throws a cumbersome rider. There lay the black monster sprawling in the London mud, while I, with a lightened heart, held my face towards the north, and sang "Auld lang syne, my dear," at the top of my voice. I declare, upon my honour, that I did not care a straw what might become of the household gods that I had gathered round my hearth in the land of my adoption. Let the house burn, let the bank break, let others scramble to my perch on Parnassus, and fling me down to the very bottom of the hill. What cared I? I was going to Scotland, bonny Scotland, land of the mountain and the flood, my own, my native land! The bootmaker in the Strand, of whom I bought a pair of shooting-boots, with brown tops, which subsequently rendered me illustrious, must have thought me demented. The cabman, I have good reason to believe, thought I was intoxicated, and he was right. But it was not with liquor; it was with patriotism. And is it not a noble thing to be intoxicated with patriotism? Get intoxicated with drink, and the magistrate will fine you five shillings; get intoxicated with patriotism, and the king will cut your head off. I was more fit for the notice of the Privy Council than of Sir Thomas Henry, of Bow-street. I was actually humming "Wha wadna' fecht for Charlie?"

In the midst of this patriotic outburst I was suddenly troubled for the safety of my luggage on the roof. Charlie was dead, but my portmanteau had still an existence, and contained a change of linen. My luggage was all right. No sneaking London thief had scrambled up behind and abstracted it. I ascertained this in a moment without moving from my seat. I will tell you how. It may be useful to you some day. Keep your eye on the shop-windows, and you will see cab, luggage, and all reflected therein. I am not going to boast that I was so clever as to find this out for myself; somebody told me.

My instructor was the driver of a twopenny 'bus. In his love-affairs he had been cut out by his own conductor, the bow-legged young man who married Polly Perkins of Paddington-green. The driver had carried on with Polly "previous." They were in a swell family together, he as footman and Polly as lady's-maid. One day they accompanied their mistress in the carriage to the London Bridge railway station, the loving pair sitting in the rumble behind. When the mistress got out at the station she discharged them both with a month's wages, but without a character. Joe and Polly, unmindful of the laws of reflection, had been larking outside in the rumble, and the mistress had been a witness to all their goings on by means of the shop windows. "It was a lesson to me, sir; and it may be a lesson to you, as regards luggage, if not as regards love."

The most difficult and tedious part of the journey from Charing-cross to John o' Groats, is the short distance—little more than three miles—which lies between Temple-bar and the wharf at Wapping. When I am brought to a stand-still in Cheapside by a gaping crowd looking up at the figures of Gog and Magog on Mr. Bennett's clock, and nearly come to grief there, I am reminded of a Scotchman who, on making his first appearance in London, actually did come to grief through being attracted by a similar spectacle in Fleet-street more than two hundred years ago. Here is the scene over again. Richard Monoplies, gaping at the images on St. Dunstan's, and Vin Jin and Francis Tunstall (turned pickpockets in the nineteenth century as the result of having been idle apprentices in the seventeenth) easing him of the very few bawbees he has brought from Scotland with him. And, by the way, those two nickums (capital Scotch word for saucy young scamps), Vin and Frank, had the first scattering in the eyes of Scotchmen of that pungent chaff to which I have alluded at the opening of this paper. It was a sore subject with them. They were reckless young dogs, who, at the cry of "Apprentices," would leap over the counter and fly to join their companions in any devilment that might be going on, leaving the shop to take care of itself; whereas the staid Scotch loons who came south with Jingling Geordie and David Ramsay, stopped their ears to the cry, and went steadily on with their work. The idle apprentice always makes sport of the industrious one; and so we have the saucy cockney saluting the raw Scot with "Buy a watch, most noble northern Thane; buy a watch, to count the hours of plenty since the blessed moment you left Berwick behind you; buy barnacles, to see the English gold lies ready for your gripe; buy what you will, and have credit for three days, for were your pockets as bare as Father Fergus's, you're a Scot in London, and you will be stocked in that time." Thus the chaff began, to be revived and renewed when Lord Bute further aggravated the southron by bespeaking favour at court for Sir Pertinax Macsycophant and the new race of Scots who had learned to "boo." If you regard this as a digression, a halt on my journey back, I must plead Mr. Bennett's images, which, for the last twenty minutes, have stopped the way.

I would as soon steer a steam-boat through the Hebrides as drive a cab through the labyrinth of narrow streets that lies between the Minories and the Aberdeen Steam Company's wharf at Wapping. If you ever elect to travel northward by this route, be in time. If the steamer be advertised to leave her moorings at three P.M., start in your cab, say from Charing-cross, two hours earlier. There are several dock-bridges to cross, and it may happen that you will find these bridges swung back to give egress to vessels proceeding to sea. [This Johnsonian style that I am falling into is the result of a peep at the Tour to the Hebrides: good English, no doubt, but bad feeling; ill-conditioned book; shall seize an opportunity to take Johnson down a peg.] An Indiaman at every bridge will detain you perhaps an hour, and the block of vans and carts in the road will divert your course and send you round through a series of narrow and dirty streets, where the misery and squalor of the inhabitants will act like a reproach to your joyful spirit, and make you irritable and unhappy. So, if you are eager and anxious to catch the Aberdeen boat, be in time!

Let me mention an odd feeling that came over me while I was being jerked along at a snail's pace across these bridges and through these alleys. I remembered them all well, but I had not seen them for nigh twenty years. I had not seen them since the night that I first arrived in London. I saw no alteration in any of their dingy features, and this unchanged aspect of the place annihilated all the years I had lived in the south, and I was a beardless Scotch laddie again, stepping for the first time on English soil, with a breast full of hope and a pocket full of emptiness. At the gates of the wharf a dirty little public-house presented itself as an old acquaintance; on my arrival I had gone in there to taste real London porter. I thought it nectar then, fit for the gods. I went in now to see if I had preserved that impression. Alas, I hadn't; I thought it wash, not fit for the pigs. Was it Barclay and Perkins who had degenerated, or I?

There was a pleasant surprise for me when I got upon the wharf. The vessel advertised to sail that day for Aberdeen, was the Gambia, a terrible screw; but, lo and behold, the vessel which lay alongside was the magnificent paddle-steamer the City of London! Was I in a dream, or was some enchanter practising upon me? Why, this City of London was the very vessel I came up in, nigh upon twenty years ago. Could it be the same; could a ship knock about the seas for twenty years and still appear so young and so fresh? Time had set his mark upon *me*—had scored my brow a little with that indelible hard pencil of his; had satisfied my youthful ambition by growing me a beard, and now was mocking me by blanching

it; but this ship was as trim and taut, as agile on her iron legs as when she first began her sea-life. Alas, that iron and wood should last so long and flesh and blood so soon decay! Even the useless willow survives us, living on to scatter its leaves in sport upon our graves!

Yes, it was the same ship, with the same smell of toddy coming up the cabin stairs, the same pictures in the saloon, the same huge chest of a snuff-box on the mantelshelf. She had been out in the wars since I was last on board of her; had tossed in the Bay of Biscay, O; had thundered before Sebastopol; and here she was, unchanged, unscathed by all the turmoil of the world, peacefully waiting to carry *me* back to Scotland. I was dreaming of the changes that had taken place in the mean time; of the empires which had fallen and risen, of the wars which had devastated the nations, of the famine and pestilence that had passed over many a land, of the great lights that had gone out, of revolutions which had changed the face of the earth—and all these events had happened, and this slip of wood had defied the rage of the sea, and was as sound and as buoyant as ever. And when I was dreaming, the bell rang, the paddles began to plash in the water, and we were off—Northward ho! for Bonny Scotland.

It gives one great importance to sail down the Thames in a big ship. The little river steamers, fussing about, greet us with cheers, and take off their hats to us as we glide majestically onward. The big ship is a great lord of the sea; those small craft are the poor and humble, trudging on some petty errand to the nearest market-town, while the great lord is setting out in state to make the grand tour and visit the capitals of the world. High up here on the broad quarter-deck we look down upon those poor people with lofty condescension, pleased to think that they are humble and know their station. We sweep past such insignificant places as Greenwich and Gravesend with disdain, smiling at the simplicity of the humble classes, to whom these tea-and-shrimpy resorts are the golden goal of a day's travel. There is that home-keeping youth, Citizen A, lying panting with fatigue at Gravesend, resting and taking his breath before he starts to return home to his wife and family, anxiously waiting tea for him at Hungerford. But our path is over the ocean wave, our home is on the deep; and presently we shall sit down to a grand banquet in a gilded saloon, the captain, in a swallow-tailed coat and black velvet waistcoat, presiding, and making a great effort to combine the aspects and attributes of a landsman with those of a commanding naval officer.

This is a peculiarity of Scotch captains. In the river, and during the early part of the voyage, they affect evening dress, chimney-pot hats, and gentlemanly manners. Having thus given all the passengers an impression that they are in every respect fit for genteel society, they suddenly dive into their cabins, and presently come up, dressed in pea-jackets and glazed caps, leaving all their politeness below with the chimney-pot and the swallow-tail. You scarcely know your captain again, when he comes up transformed in this fashion. The quick change reminds you of the clever entertainer, who, enacting the part of a mild person, disappears under the flap of a desk and comes up the next instant as a gruff person. Your captain who carries passengers is a sort of Janus, with one face for the paddle-box and another for the grand saloon, with one tongue to consign the mate or the helmsman to perdition, and another to ask a blessing, and say "With much pleasure," when the deeply-impressed passenger asks him to take wine at dinner.

It is an exceedingly pleasant journey from London to Aberdeen per City of London. It is short enough not to be tedious, and long enough to enable you to realise all the sensations of being far, far upon the sea. Starting from Wapping on Saturday afternoon, the vessel, weather permitting, heaves in sight of Aberdeen early on Monday morning. Going to bed as you leave the mouth of the Thames, you awake next morning to find yourself out of sight of land. You would not be more completely at sea, if you were in the middle of the Atlantic.

But though you are on the ocean, and in a vessel bearing the name of the English capital, you feel that you are in Scotland all the time. There is a strong Scotch flavour pervading the City of London, from stem to stern. The captain, the mate, the steward and stewardess, the sailors, the engineers, the cabin-boy, all are Scotch. Then you have Scotch haddocks for breakfast, and Scotch broth for dinner, and more Scotch haddocks for tea, with the addition of jam and marmalade, and Scotch whisky-toddy, in the Scotch fashion, afterwards. Your fellow-passengers, too, are mostly Scotch, a few of them wearing kilts and Glengarries, and the majority encumbered with guns and fishing-rods. The ship holds her way quietly and steadily, and the effort of navigation seems to be entirely subordinate to the exertions of the cook and the stewards. "A life by the galley fire" is a constant reminder to you that flesh is grass. All day long the ship is pervaded by an odour of frizzling victuals, that of the haddock running through the whole performance like a culinary fugue. The stewards are very imperative in their manner towards you; so much so that you cannot resist the impression that they have been appointed by a lunacy commission to take charge of you. Linger for a few minutes on deck, after the prandial bell rings, and a steward will come and tell you gruffly that you'd "better to go doon to your denner." His tone seems to imply that if you don't go down to your "denner" when you are told, he will lock you up in the padded room, and punish you with bread and water. And when you do go down to your "denner," your keeper stands behind your chair and tells you what you had "better" have.

"Here, sir," he says, "you'd better have some boiled beef." You are afraid to express a preference for venison or grouse-pie, lest he

might be angry and do something to you. I was so unreasonable, one afternoon, at five minutes to five P.M., as to ask for a tumbler of toddy, and I was rebuked with the intimation that it was "tay-time." I tried the effect of half-a-crown upon that Scotch steward; but he would not relax in the least. Five minutes afterwards he told me sharply that I had "better take some greens," and I was afraid to offend him, and took greens—though I can't a-bear that form of vegetable.

There was one astonishing exception to the Scotchness of everything on board this vessel—there was no service on Sunday. We waited for a bell to ring us to prayers; but it rang us to hotch-potch and haunch of mutton. So we passed a most un-Scottish Sabbath, travelling and feasting. How is it that the Sabbatarians, so strongly opposed to the trains, have overlooked the steam-boats?

Another night upon the waters, and when I wake in the morning, and look through the port-hole of my cabin, my eyes rest upon the granite towers and spires of Aberdeen, glittering under the sun, like a city of crystal. How eager I was to leave them; how joyful I am to see them once again! Yonder rise the white towers of my Alma Mater. I remember with what a sense of relief I broke from her apron-strings. I am going back now, to weep over her grave. The flag is run up from the ship, and is answered from the shore, we bound over the bar, run along side the quay, and the next instant my foot is on my native heath, though my name (I am bound to add) is *not* MacGregor.

PERPETUAL POULTRY.

A PASSENGER by the London, Chatham, and Dover Railway (unlimited), if he looks out at the right window of the carriage at the right time, may see a bran new board perched up in a field near Bromley, with the inscription NATIONAL POULTRY COMPANY. Near it, are some new buildings, chiefly a very long narrow shed with a glass roof, something like a greenhouse with a strip of garden by the side.

This is the first instalment, the letter A, of a scheme which (let us suppose, as a pleasant guess) is to supply us all with poultry and eggs on the shortest notice and the most reasonable terms. Beeves and muttons are at a premium, and we must either pay high, or dispense with butcher's meat.

What can we do in the poultry line, some people ask, in this emergency? Can poultry be made nearly as cheap as mutton and beef? A hen thinks nothing of laying a hundred eggs in a year; and as each egg contains within it, what Dr. Johnson would have called the potentiality of a chicken, it looks like a power in every hen to supply us with a large amount of excellent food. Or, if we desiderate eggs as well as chickens, we can dispense with the incubation, and consign some of the eggs at once to the cook. But this, like most other good things in which money is concerned, depends on the ratio of prices, or the ratio between the cost of the food for the fowls and the price obtained for the produce.

The French have the credit of understanding this matter better than we. After having supplied all their own wants (they eat much more poultry and eggs than the English), they sell us nearly a million eggs per day (last year the import was three hundred and forty millions, mostly from France). Many reasons have been assigned for this; but the chief is, that French farms being smaller than English, large grazing operations are not so successfully adopted, and there is more facility as well as more time to attend to what may be called domestic farming, or the rearing of the smaller animals. Then the farmers' wives and daughters are not so stylish, not so much given to pianofortes and silks, as the farmers' wives and daughters in our own country; they do more in the farm-yard, piggery, poultry-yard, and dairy. Moreover, a poor light loose soil is better for poultry than richer land; and perhaps we may take the liberty of supposing that French soil is, on an average, less rich than that of English. Be all this as it may, however, the French pay more attention to poultry, and the accessories of poultry, than we do. If it be true, as some allege, that our neighbours make away with four thousand millions of eggs every year, this would give a hundred eggs or so to every French man, woman, boy, girl, and baby, all round; and we can only say that we envy them. In Ireland there are egg-runners, boys who run or walk many miles every day, buying up the eggs from the peasantry, taking them to a dealer, and receiving so much per hundred for their trouble.

Poultry fanciers are not poultry farmers, seeing that they look more for praises and prizes on account of the beauty of the animals than for commercial profit in the market. They can tell you about the merits and demerits of all the several breeds of fowls:—Dorkings, Bredas, Cochin-Chinas, Shanghaes, Spanish, Minorcas, Normandies, Crève Cœurs, Brahma pootras, Bruges, Chittagongs, Hamburgs, Polands, Russians, Anconas, Rangoons, Malay, Brazilian, and the rest. They can tell you that the common barn-door fowl is a sort of scamp or Bohemian, of no breed in particular, but a good useful fellow nevertheless; that the bantam is a pretty little chap of a pound weight or so, liked rather for his pluck and his prettiness, than for his poultry value; that the silky fowl is next larger than the bantam, weighing perhaps a pound and a half or two pounds; that the game fowl, cock and hen alike, are too fond of fighting to be peaceful poultry; that the Hamburg hen is a prime favourite, presenting her owner with two hundred eggs or more in a year; that, take them all in all, fowls present a medium weight of from five to seven pounds each, and that their eggs vary from one and a half to two and three-quarter ounces each. Then, besides the gallinaceous kinds, there are others—turkeys,

geese, ducks, pigeons—which come within the designation poultry; and each has its long list of fancy names. And then the breeder or fancier can tell you something about the maladies that poultry-flesh is heir to: such as baldness, white comb, cramp, apoplexy, hard crop, bumble feet, leg weakness, roup, gapes, pip, and other unpleasant ailments; or if he does not understand these things, so much the worse for him—his property will fall off, and he will not know the reason why. Some of the amateur poultry-houses are fine affairs; such as the royal poultry-house at Windsor, with its walks and paths for the fowls, its elegant comfort all around, and its looking-glasses for the pigeons to view themselves in.

It must come to a matter of statistics in the long run, to determine whether poultry-keeping on an extensive scale will be a permanently profitable adventure, and whether cottagers can share with general farmers in this profit. Like as in a railway company, there is a capital account and there is a revenue account, and both must be studied before you can know how you are getting on. You construct your poultry-house and yard, and buy fowls to stock it: this is your invested capital. You buy daily food for the fowls: this is your current outlay. You sell eggs and chickens, or perhaps grown-up fowls: these are your current receipts; finally, out of the last two items (or rather out of all three items) you calculate your net profit.

The journals which devote a portion of their pages to this kind of lore, give numerous examples, tending to show whether poultry-keeping is profitable, and to what extent; whether some breeds are more profitable than others; whether each hen should be encouraged to sit upon her own eggs, or whether some hens are better fitted for sitters and others for layers. A mysterious instinct is this, of brooding or sitting upon several eggs until the chicks within become vitalised. The patient hen sits upon the eggs for three weeks or so, never leaving them for more than about half an hour a day. Her soft body keeps them warm, for they are all tucked in under her, as snugly as Thumb and his seven brothers were tucked into the big bed. She does it because she likes it, and that's all we know about it. The eggs may not be hers; they may be of another family, belonging to the hen living next door, or over the way, or round the corner. The hens are warm blankets, eider-down quilts, for the time being. The temperature of their bodies, as they sit covering and hiding the eggs, is just that which is best suited for developing the chicks; and when each chick is strong enough to break through its white prison-house and strut forth into the world, the work of the sitter is done. The period of sitting, about three weeks for fowls, is four weeks for ducks and turkeys, and a little more for geese. Sometimes, hens will voluntarily sit upon eggs which are not their own; at other times they need to be solicited or coaxed to this duty. A capon (generally known to us as a plump addition to the good things of the table) can sometimes be induced to sit upon eggs; his services in this way are as useful as those of a hen, if his body be as warm and his patience as great. Reaumur mentions a French lady who regularly employed capons to brood over the eggs; the hens laid more eggs when relieved from this duty; and a capon can sit upon more eggs at one time than a hen, being larger and fatter.

One kind of experiment, patiently waiting to know its fate, is that of artificial hatching, developing the chicks without any brooding whatever. Continuous warmth for three weeks being almost the only necessary condition, men have asked whether this warmth cannot be supplied in some other way, and at a less expense. The heat of bakehouses has sometimes been employed; but what with the attention needed by the bread, and that needed by the eggs, the result in most cases has been—a muddle. The Egyptians are credited with a system of incubation on a large and complete scale. Certain persons undertake this work for all the poultry-rearers in a particular district. They build brick ovens, called mamals, each comprising passages, chambers, fireplaces, flues, and man-holes. A temperature, never varying far from one hundred degrees Fahrenheit, is constantly maintained, by burning fuel made of cakes of dried cow-dung mixed with straw. The eggs are laid upon flax or mats in the warm chambers. Half a million eggs can be hatched in one mamal in a year. The mamal-keeper has board and lodging, a certain amount of money wages, and all above a specified number of chicks that he can hatch out of a given number of eggs:—an arrangement that holds out to him an inducement to do his best. M. Dabry, French consul at Hankow, has lately published in the Bulletin de la Société d'Acclimatation, an interesting account of the system of artificial incubation practised by the Chinese; by a careful arrangement of fuel, earthenware dishes, and thick cotton quilts, in close mud-huts called pao-jang, they liberate about seven hundred chicks from a thousand eggs. Whether the artificial mother system, as it has been called, will succeed in the humid and variable climate of England, has long been, and still is, a disputed question. In whatever way constructed, these mothers are virtually trays on which eggs can be kept warm till the chicks are developed. Some years ago, Mr. Bucknell invited all the world to come and see his Eccaleobion, or "Invoker of life." It was an oblong box, nine feet long, three feet wide, and about the same in height; he had the means of maintaining an equable temperature within it, and of providing shelf-room for two thousand eggs at once. Yet the Eccaleobion went, we know not whither. And then there was Mr. Cantelo's hydro-incubator, exhibited in his model poultry-farm at Chiswick. A covering of waterproof cloth was laid upon the eggs; warm water was kept constantly

flowing over the cloth; and the space underneath was so arranged as to accommodate the movements of the young chicks, after the three weeks of incubation were ended. It is admitted that the end was achieved; but perhaps the cost was too great. At any rate, the hydro-incubator went the same way as the Eccaleobion.

The long building seen from the railway, is a poultry-house of the new Poultry Company, between three and four hundred feet in length by twenty in width; the adjacent land is being laid out for five other similar buildings. There will be strips of market gardens between the several buildings, and there will be courts of various kinds for the chicks to take their pleasure in. There will be tanks surmounting water towers, for the supply both of the poultry houses and the market gardens. In the one poultry-house at present constructed, there are wire-parted compartments on both sides of a central avenue, perches for the fowls when they want to go to roost, food and drink receptacles conveniently placed, a steady temperature maintained by hot-air pipes, doors through which the fowls can go out from their own apartment to a strip of open-air garden, boxes with open sides next to the coops or hutches, nests conveniently placed within the boxes, facilities for the hen to go in and out of the nest, brooding places for incubating the eggs, artificial mothers for the chicks to creep under when they want to be warm and snug, and all sorts of ingenious little contrivances. The company say they mean to adopt hen-hatching, steam-hatching, or hot-air-hatching, or all three, in order to give each system a fair trial. They are going to supply us with eggs, chickens, fowls, and capons, out of number. Everything is to be done on a large scale. The market garden will help to feed the poultry, and will help Covent Garden Market besides. There will be ducks and pigs fattened on refuse. There will be ranges of killing, plucking, and dressing, rooms for the poultry. There will be a market found for the fowls' feathers, combs, kidneys, heads, necks, and feet; all these things being worth money to persons who know how to deal with them. Poultry manure is said by chemists to be among the richest of all fertilisers; and a money value will be found for what is wasted by most English poultry keepers. The owner of the land is a partner in the company; and the presiding genius, Mr. Geyelin, has made himself acquainted with what is doing by poultry rearers on the Continent. There are blank forms to be filled up every day, showing cost price, number of eggs, weight of eggs, quantity of food, cost of food, &c. The enterprise deserves a fair trial; and if the shareholders gain, it can only be because *we*, the public, gain—that is, it will be worth our while to buy largely, and so to return a good dividend to the shareholders.

Who knows? While Mr. Frank Buckland is working hard to improve our fish supply, this or some similar company may be able to show how we may become an egg-eating and a poultry-eating people. They could not do it at a better time than in a time of scarcity.

HALF A MILLION OF MONEY.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "BARBARA'S HISTORY."

CHAPTER LX. UPON THE SEA.

Olimpia had said truly when she averred that Lord Castletowers was the only volunteer whom her father would refuse to enlist on any terms. When the young man met him presently at the door of the Trinacria, and he learned that they were about to follow the troops to Melazzo, he used every argument to turn them from the project.

"Think of Lady Castletowers," he said. "Remember how she disapproves of the cause."

"It is a cause which for the last seven years I have pledged myself to serve," replied the Earl.

"But you never pledged yourself to serve it in the field!"

"Because I never intended (through respect for my mother's prejudices) to place myself in a position that should leave me no alternative. I had not the remotest intention of coming here three weeks ago. If Montecuculi, or Vaughan, or yourself had urged me to take up arms for Sicily, I should have refused. But circumstances have brought me here; and having set my foot upon the soil, I mean to do my duty."

"It is a false view of duty," said Colonna. "You are peculiarly situated, and you have no right to act thus."

"You must blame fate—not me," replied the Earl.

"And you, Mr. Trefalden, have you asked yourself whether your adopted father would approve of this expedition?"

"My adopted father is a man of peace," replied Saxon, "and he loves me as he loves nothing else on earth; but he would sooner send me to my death than urge me to behave like a coward."

"God forbid that I should urge any man to do that," said Colonna, earnestly. "If the enemies' guns were drawn up before these windows, I would not counsel you to turn away from them; but I do counsel you not to go fifty miles hence in search of them."

"It is just as disgraceful to turn one's back upon them at fifty miles' distance as at fifty yards," said Saxon, who happened just then to be thinking of Miss Hatherton's hint about the goose and the golden eggs.

"But you were going to Norway," persisted Signor Colonna. "You only came out of your way to set me down in this place, and, having set me down, why not follow out your former plans?"

"Shall I tell you why, caro amico?" said the Earl, gaily. "Because we are young—because we love adventure, and danger—and, above all, because we smell gunpowder! There—it is of

no use to try discussion. We are a couple of obstinate fellows, and our minds are made up."

And Colonna, seeing that they were made up, wisely said no more.

General Sirtori had been made Pro-Dictator during the absence of Garibaldi; and Colonna, though he declined any recognised ministerial office, remained at Palermo to lead the revolutionary cabinet, and supply, as he had been supplying them for the last five-and-twenty years, the brains of his party. So the young men bade him farewell, and set sail that evening at about eleven o'clock, taking with them a Palermitan pilot who knew the coast.

It was a glorious night, warm and cloudless, and lighted by a moon as golden and gorgeous as that beneath which the Grecian host sat by their watch-fires, "on the pass of war." A light but steady breeze filled the sails of the Albula, and crested every little wave with silver foam. To the left lay the open sea—to the right, the mountainous coast-line, dark and indefinite, with here and there a sparkling cluster of distant lights marking the site of some town beside the sea. By-and-by, as they left Palermo further and further behind, a vast, mysterious, majestic mass rose gradually above the seaward peaks, absorbing, as it were, all the lesser heights, and lifting the pale profile of a snowy summit against the dark blue of the sky. This was Etna.

The young men passed the night on deck. Unconscious of fatigue, they paced to and fro in the moonlight and talked of things which they had that day seen, and of the stirring times to come. Then, as the profound beauty and stillness of the scene brought closer confidence and graver thoughts, their conversation flowed into deeper channels, and they spoke of life, and love, and death, and that Hope that takes away the victory of the grave.

"And yet," said Saxon, in reply to some observation of his friend's, "life is worth having, if only for life's sake. Merely to look upon the sun, and feel its warmth—to breathe the morning air—to see the stars at night—to listen to the falling of the avalanches, or the sighing of the wind in the pine forests, are enjoyments and privileges beyond all price. When I hear a man say that he does not care how soon he walks out of the sunshine into his grave, I look at him to see whether he has eyes that see and ears that hear like my own."

"And supposing that he is neither blind nor deaf, yet still persists—what then?"

"Then I conclude that he is deceiving himself, or me—perhaps, both."

"Why not put a more charitable construction upon it, and say that he is mad?" laughed the Earl. "Ah, Saxon, my dear fellow, you talk as one who has never known sorrow. The love of nature is a fine taste—especially when one has youth, friends, and hope, to help one in the cultivation of it; but when youth is past and the friends of youth are gone, I am afraid the love of nature is not alone sufficient to make the fag-end of life particularly well worth having. The sunshine is a pleasant thing enough, and the wind makes a grand sort of natural music among the pines; but you may depend that a time will come when the long lost light of a certain pair of eyes, and 'the sound of a voice that is still,' will be more to you than either."

"I have never denied that," replied Saxon. "I only maintain that life is such a glorious gift, and its privileges are so abundant, that it ought never to seem wholly valueless to any reasoning being."

"That depends on what the reasoning being has left to live for," said the Earl.

"He has life to live for—life, thought, science, the glories of the material world, the good of his fellow-men."

"The man who lives for his fellow-men, and the man who lives for science, must both begin early," replied the Earl. "You cannot take up either philanthropy or science as a pis aller. And as for the glories of the material world, my friend, they make a splendid mise en scène; but what is the mise en scène without the drama?"

"By the drama, you mean, I suppose, the human interests of life?"

"Precisely. I mean that without love, and effort, and hope, and, it may be, a spice of hatred, all the avalanches and pine woods upon earth would fail to make the burden of life tolerable to any man with a human heart in his body. Your first sorrow will teach you this lesson—or your first illness. For myself, I frankly confess that I enjoy, and therefore prize, life less than I did when . . . when I believed that I had more to hope from the future."

"I am sorry for it," said Saxon. "For my own part, I should not like to believe that any Neapolitan bullet had its appointed billet in my heart to-morrow."

"And yet you risk it."

"That's just the excitement of the thing. Fighting is like gambling. No man gambles in the hope of losing, and no man fights in the hope of being killed; but where would be the pleasure of either gambling or fighting, if one placed no kind of value on the stakes?"

The Earl smiled, and made no reply. Presently Saxon spoke again.

"But I say, Castletowers, a fellow might get killed, you know; mightn't he?"

"If the castle of Melazzo is half so strong a place as I have heard it is, I think a good many fellows will get killed," was the reply.

"Then—then it's my opinion"

"That the stakes are too precious to be risked?"

"By Jove, no! but that I ought to have made my will."

"You have never made one?"

"Never; and, you see, I have so much money, that I ought to do something useful with it, in case of anything going wrong. Don't you think so?"

"Undoubtedly."

"Can you help me to write it?"

"I, my dear boy? Not for the world. We should be only sowing the seeds of a fine

Chancery suit between us, if I did. Wait till we reach Melazzo—there are plenty of lawyers in Garibaldi's army."

"I shall leave some of it to you, Castletowers," said Saxon.

"Oh king, live for ever! I want neither thy money nor thy life."

Saxon looked at his friend, and his thoughts again reverted to the words that he had heard in his cousin's office on the day when he first made acquaintance with Signor Nazzari, of Austin Friars.

"Can you give me any idea of what a mortgage is?" he asked, presently.

"No one better," replied the Earl, bitterly. "A mortgage is the poison which a dying man leaves in the cup of his successor. A mortgage is an iron collar which, while he wears it, makes a slave of a free-born man, and, when he earns the right to take it off, leaves him a beggar."

"You speak strongly."

"I speak from hard experience. A mortgage has left me poor for life; and you know what my poverty has cost me."

"But if means could be taken to pay that mortgage off"

"It is paid off," interrupted Lord Castletowers. "Every penny of it."

"Would you mind telling me how much it was?" asked Saxon, hesitatingly.

"Not at all. It was a very large sum for me, though it may not sound like a very large sum to you. Twenty-five thousand pounds."

Saxon uttered a half-suppressed exclamation.

"Will you let me ask one more question?" he said. "Did you owe this money to a man named Behrens?"

"How do you know that?"

"Never mind—only tell me."

"Yes. To Oliver Behrens—a London man—the same who bought that outlying corner of our dear old park, and—confound him!—had the insolence to build a modern villa on it."

"And you have really paid him?"

"Of course I have paid him."

"How long ago?"

"Two years ago, at the least. Perhaps longer."

Saxon put his hand to his forehead in a bewildered way. A doubt—a dark and terrible doubt that had never been wholly banished—started up again in his mind, and assumed for the first time distinct and definite proportions.

"And now, having answered all your questions by the book, I shall expect you to answer mine," said Lord Castletowers.

"Pray do not ask me any," said Saxon, hurriedly.

"But I must do so. I must know where you heard of Oliver Behrens, and how you came to know that he was my father's mortgagee. Did Mr. Trefalden tell you?"

Saxon shook his head.

"And this is not the first time that you have asked me whether I am in debt," urged the Earl. "I remember once before—that day, you know, at home, when Montecuculi came—you seemed to think I had some money trouble on my mind. Surely it cannot be Mr. Trefalden who has given you this impression?"

"No—indeed, no."

"Because he knows my affairs as well, or better than I know them myself."

"He has never spoken to me of your affairs, Castletowers—never," said Saxon, earnestly.

"Then who else has been doing so? Not Vaughan? Not Colonna?"

But Saxon entreated his friend not to urge any more questions upon him, and with this request, after one or two ineffectual remonstrances, the Earl complied.

And now it was already dawning day. The moon had paled and sunk long since, and a faint mist, above which the great mountain towered, ghost-like, with its crown of snow and smoke, had spread itself along the coast. Presently the light in the east grew brighter and wider, and a strange, glorious colour—a colour compounded, as it were, of rose and gold—flushed suddenly over the snow-fields of Etna. For a moment the grand summit seemed to hang as if suspended in the air, glowing and transfigured, like the face of the lawgiver to whom the Lord had spoken as a man speaketh unto his friend. Then, almost as suddenly as it had come there, the glory faded off, and left only the pure sunshine in its place. At the same moment, the mists along the coast began to rise in long vaporous lines about the sides of the mountain; and, by-and-by, as they drifted slowly away to the leeward, a long rocky promontory that looked like an island, but was, in fact, connected with the mainland by a sandy flat, became dimly visible far away at sea.

"Ecco, signore—ecco la rocca di Melazzo!" said the Palermitan pilot.

But this announcement, which would have raised Saxon's pulse to fever heat half an hour before, now scarcely quickened the beating of his heart by a single throb. He was thinking of William Trefalden; vainly regretting the promise by which he had bound himself to repeat no word of Mr. Behrens' conversation; and enduring in silence the first shock of that vague and terrible mistrust which had now struck root in his mind, hereafter to flourish and bear bitter fruit.

CHAPTER LXI. HEAD-QUARTERS.

The promontory of Melazzo reaches out about four miles into the sea, curving round to the westward at its furthest point, so as to form a little bay, and terminating in a light-house. Consisting as it does of a chain of rocks varying from a mile to a quarter of a mile in breadth, and rising in places to a height of seven hundred feet, it looks almost like some sleeping sea monster heaving its huge bulk half above the waters. Towards the mainland, these rocks end abruptly over against the little isthmus on which the town is built; and upon their lower terraces, frowning over the streets below, and protected by the higher cliffs beyond, the castle stands, commanding land and sea. It is

a composite structure enough, consisting of an ancient Norman tower and a whole world of outlying fortifications. French, English, and Neapolitans have strengthened and extended the walls from time to time, till much of the old town, and even the cathedral, has come to be enclosed within their rambling precincts. In the year eighteen hundred and sixty, this castle of Melazzo mounted forty guns of heavy calibre; so that the fanciful spectator, if he had begun by comparing the promontory to a sea monster, might well have pursued his comparison a step further, by likening the castle to its head, and the bristling bastions to its dangerous jaws.

On the flat below, looking westward towards Termini, and eastward towards Messina, with its pier, its promenade, and those indispensable gates, without which no Italian town could possibly be deemed complete, stands modern Melazzo —a substantial, well-built place, washed on both sides by the sea. Immediately beyond the town gates, reaching up to the spurs of the inland mountains which here approach the shore, opens out a broad angle of level country, some six miles in width by three in depth. It is traversed by a few roads, and dotted over with three or four tiny hamlets. Here and there, a detached farm-house, or neglected villa, lifts its flat roof above the vineyards and olive groves which cover every foot of available ground between the mountains and the sea. Divided by broad belts of cane-brake, and intersected by ditches and water-courses, these plantations alone form a wide outlying series of natural defences.

Such is the topography of Melazzo, where Garibaldi fought the hardest and best-contested battle of his famous Neapolitan campaign.

Having anchored the little Albula in a narrow creek well out of sight and reach of the Neapolitan guns, Saxon and Castletowers shouldered their rifles and made their way to Meri, a village about a couple of miles inland, built up against the slopes of the mountains, and cut off from the plain by a broad water-course with a high stone wall on either side. It was in this village that General Medici had taken up his position while awaiting reinforcements from Palermo; and here the new comers found assembled the main body of the Garibaldian army.

The City of Aberdeen had arrived some hours before the Albula, and flooded the place with red-shirts. There were horses and mules feeding on trusses of hay thrown down in the middle of the narrow street; groups of volunteers cleaning their rifles, eating, drinking, smoking, and sleeping; others hastily piling up a barricade at the further end of the village; and some hard at work with mattresses and sand-bags strengthening the upper rooms of those houses that looked towards Melazzo. A strange medley of languages met the ear in every direction. Here stood a knot of Hungarians, there a group of French, a little further on a company of raw German recruits undergoing a very necessary course of drill. All was life, movement, expectation. The little hamlet rang with the tramp of men and the rattle of arms, and the very air seemed astir with the promise of war.

Arrived in the midst of this busy scene, the friends came to a halt, and consulted as to what they should do next. At the same moment a couple of officers in the English military undress came by, laden with provisions. They carried between them a huge stone bottle in a wicker coat with handles—one of those ill-formed, plethoric, modern amphoræ, holding about six gallons, in which the Italian wine-seller delights to store his thin vintages of Trani and Scylla—and besides this divided burden, one was laden with black bread, and the other with a couple of live hens tied up in a pocket-handkerchief.

"By Jove!" exclaimed the owner of the hens, "Castletowers and Trefalden!"

It was Major Vaughan.

They shook hands cordially, and he invited them to accompany him to his quarters.

"I am capitally lodged," he said, "at the top of a house down yonder. We have been foraging, you see, and can give you a splendid supper. You can pluck a fowl, I suppose, upon occasion?"

"I will do my best," laughed the Earl; "but I fear your poultry is no longer in the bloom of youth."

"If for ten days you had eaten nothing but green figs, with an occasional scrap of black bread or sea-biscuit, you would be superior to all such prejudices," replied the dragoon. "Now it is my opinion that age cannot wither the oldest hen that ever laid an egg. Do you see that man on the roof of yonder high house behind the vineyard? That is Garibaldi. He has been up there all day, surveying the ground. We shall have some real work to do to-morrow."

"Then you think there will be a battle to-morrow!" said Saxon, eagerly.

"No doubt of it—and Bosco is about the only good general the Neapolitans have. He is a thorough soldier, and his troops are all picked men, well up to fighting."

"If you command a corps, I hope you will take us in," said the Earl.

"I do not command a corps—I am on the staff; that is to say, I do anything that is useful, and am not particular. This morning I was a drill-sergeant—yesterday, when Bosco tried to dislodge our outposts at Corriola, I took a turn at the guns. To-morrow, perhaps, if we get in among that confounded cane-brake down yonder, I may take an axe, and do a little pioneering. We are soldiers-of-all-work here, as you will soon find out for yourselves."

"At all events you must give us something to do."

The dragoon shrugged his shoulders. "You will find plenty to do," said he, "when the time comes. It is too late now to enrol you in any special regiment for to-morrow's work. But we will talk of this after supper. In the mean while, here are my quarters."

So they followed him, and helped not only to pluck, but to cook the hens, and afterwards to eat them; though the last was, perhaps, the most difficult task of the three; and after supper, having seen General Cosenz inspect a

thousand of the troops, they went round with Vaughan and visited the outposts. When at length they got back to Meri, it was past ten o'clock, and the same glorious moon that had lighted them on their way the night before, shone down alike upon castle and sea, vineyard and village, friend and foe, wakeful patrol and sleeping soldier.

CHAPTER LXII. HOW THE BATTLE BEGAN AT MELAZZO.

THE bugle sounded before dawn, and in the first grey of the morning, Meri was alive with soldiers. There had been no absolute stillness, as of universal rest, all the night through; but now there was a great wakefulness about the place—a strange kind of subdued tumult, that had in it something very solemn and exciting.

By five, the whole Garibaldian body was under arms. The village street, the space about the fountain, the open slopes between the houses and the torrent of Santa Lucia, and part of the main road beyond, were literally packed with men. Of these the Cacciatori, bronzed with old campaigns and wearing each his glossy plume of cocks' feathers, looked the most soldierly. For the rest of the troops, the scarlet shirt was their only bond of uniformity, and but for the resolute way in which they handled their arms, and the steady composure of their faces, many a well-trained soldier might have been disposed to smile at their incongruous appearance. There was that about the men, however, at which neither friend nor foe could afford to make merry.

"How many do you number altogether?" asked Saxon, as they passed along the lines to the little piazza, Major Vaughan leading his horse, and the two others following.

"Taken en masse, Cacciatori, Tuscan, Piedmontese, and foreign volunteers, about four thousand four hundred fighting men."

"No more?"

"Oh yes, about two thousand more," replied the dragoon, "if you count the Sicilian squadri—but they are only shouting men. Look—here comes Garibaldi!"

A prolonged murmur that swelled into a cheer, ran from line to line as the Dictator rode slowly into the piazza with his staff. He was smoking a little paper cigarette, and looking exactly like his portraits, placid, good humoured, and weather-beaten, with his gold chain festooned across the breast of his red shirt, and a black silk handkerchief knotted loosely round his neck.

"That is Medici at his right hand," said Vaughan, springing into the saddle, "and the one now speaking to him is Colonel Dunn. Now the best thing you two fellows can do, will be to keep with the main body, and as near the staff as you can. You will then see whatever is best worth seeing, and have the chance of using your rifles as well. By Jove! Malenchini has his orders, and is moving off already."

As he spoke the words, the Tuscan general marched by at the head of his battalion, taking the westward road towards Santa Marina, where the Neapolitans had an outpost by the sea.

"One word more," said the dragoon, hurriedly. "If I fall, I should wish Miss Colonna to have Gulnare. She always liked the little Arab, and would be kind to her. Will either of you remember that for me?"

"Both—both!" replied Saxon and the Earl, in one breath.

"Thanks—and now fare you well. I don't suppose we shall find ourselves within speaking distance again for the next five hours."

With this, he waved his hand, dashed across the piazza, and fell in with the rest of the staff. At the same moment General Cosenz, having orders to conduct the attack upon the Neapolitan left at Archi, rode off to take the command of his veterans; while Fabrizi and his Sicilians—a mere boyish impulsive rabble, of whom no leader could predict half an hour beforehand whether they would fight like demons, or run away like children—bore off to the extreme right, to intercept any Neapolitan reinforcements that might be advancing from Messina. Finally, when right and left were both en route, the main columns under Medici were set in motion, and began defiling in excellent order along the St. Pietro road, leaving Colonel Dunn's regiment to form the reserve.

Following Vaughan's advice, the two young men shouldered their rifles, and marched with the centre. It was now about six o'clock. The sun was already gaining power; but a fresh wind was blowing from the sea, and the vines on either side of the road were bright with dew. As they passed over the little bridge beyond the village, and looked down upon the flats below, they could see Malenchini's division winding along to the left, and Cosenz' men rapidly disappearing to the right. Then their own road sloped suddenly downward, and they saw only a continuous stream of scarlet shirts and gleaming rifles. On it rolled, to the measured, heavy, hundred-fold tramp of resolute feet, never ceasing, never pausing, with only the waving cane-brake on either side, and the blue sky overhead.

In the mean while the enemy's forces were known to be drawn up in a great semicircle about half way between Meri and Melazzo, reaching as far as Archi to the right, and down to the sea shore beyond Marina to the left. But not a man was visible. Completely hidden by the cane-brake and the vines, favoured by the flatness of the ground, prepared to fall back upon the town if necessary, and, if driven from the town, to take refuge in the castle, they occupied a position little short of impregnable.

Presently, as the Garibaldians descended further and further into the plain, a distant volley was heard in the direction of Santa Marina, and they knew that Malenchini's men had come up with the extreme right of the Neapolitan semicircle. An eager murmur ran along the ranks, and a mounted officer came riding down the line.

"Silenzio!" said he. "Silenzio!"

It was young Beni. Seeing Saxon and Castletowers marching as outsiders, he smiled and nodded, then rose in his stirrups, and reconnoitred ahead.

In the same instant the sharp report of a rifle rang through the canes, and a ball whizzed by. Beni laughed and held up his hat, which was pierced in two places.

"Well aimed, first shot!" said he, and rode back again.

And now the plantations on either side of the road seemed all at once to swarm with invisible foes. Ball after ball whistled through the canes, gap after gap opened suddenly in the forward ranks. Those in the rear flung themselves by hundreds into the vineyards, firing almost at random, and guided only by the smoke of their enemies' rifles; but the front poured steadily on.

Every moment the balls flew thicker and the men fell faster. A German to whom Saxon had been speaking but the instant before, went down, stone dead, close against his feet, and Saxon heard the cruel "thud" of the ball as it crashed into his brain. Medici's horse dropped under him; Beni came dashing past again, with a bloody handkerchief bound round his arm; Garibaldi and his officers pressed closer to the front—and still not a single Neapolitan had yet been seen.

Suddenly the whole mass of the centre, quickening its pace in obedience to the word of command, advanced at a run, firing right and left into the cane-brake, and making straight for a point whence the balls had seemed to come thickest. Then came a terrific flash about twenty paces ahead—a roar that shook the very earth. The men fell back in confusion. They had been running in the very teeth of a masked battery!

As the smoke cleared, the ground was seen to be literally ploughed up with grape-shot, and strewn with dead and dying.

Castletowers flung down his rifle, rushed in among the wounded, and dragged first one, then another, into the shelter of the cane-brake.

Saxon clambered into an olive-tree beside the road, and, heedless of the balls that came peppering round him, began coolly picking off the Neapolitan gunners.

In the mean while Medici's columns had recoiled upon those behind, and the whole mass was thrown into disorder. To add to the confusion, a cry went up that Garibaldi was wounded.

At this critical moment, while the road was yet blocked with men, Major Vaughan came galloping round by the front. Despatched with orders to the rear, and unable to force his way through, he had chosen this perilous alternative. Dashing across the open space between the battery and the Garibaldians, he at once became the target of a dozen invisible rifles, was seen to reel in his saddle, sway over, and fall within a foot or two of Saxon's olive-tree.

In less than a second the young fellow had leaped down, lifted the dragoon in his strong arms, carried him out of the road, and placed him with his back against the tree.

"Are you much hurt?" he asked, eagerly.

Vaughan bent his head feebly.

"Take my horse," he said, speaking in broken gasps, and keeping his hand pressed close against his side. "Ride round to the rear—bid Dunn bring up the reserve—and charge the battery—in flank."

"I will; but can you bear to be carried a few yards further?"

"Tell him there's a wall—to the left of the guns—under cover of which—he can bring up—his men."

"Yes, yes; but, first of all"

"Confound you!—go at once—or the day—is lost!"

Saying which, he leaned forward, pointed impatiently to the horse, and fell over on his face.

Saxon just lifted him—looked at the white face—laid the head gently back, sprang into Gulnare's empty saddle, and rode off at full speed. As he did so, he saw that Medici's men had formed again, that Garibaldi was himself cheering them on to the attack, and that Castletowers had fallen in with the advancing columns.

To rush to the rear, deliver his orders, dismount, and tie up the Arab in a place of safety, was the work of only a few moments. He then returned with Dunn's regiment, threading his way through the vines like the rest, and approaching the battery under cover of a wall and ditch away to the left, as Vaughan had directed.

Coming up to the battery, they found a sharp struggle already begun—the Neapolitans defending their guns at the point of the bayonet—Medici's men swarming gallantly over the earthworks, and Garibaldi, sword in hand, in the midst of the fray.

The word was given; the reserve charged at a run; and Saxon found himself the next moment inside the battery, driven up against a gun-carriage, and engaged in a hand-to-hand fight with two Neapolitan gunners, both of whom he shot dead with his revolver.

"Drag off the guns!" shouted Colonel Dunn.

The men flung themselves upon the pieces, surrounded, seized, and put them instantly in motion—the Neapolitans fell back, opened out to right and left, and made way for their cavalry.

Then Saxon heard a coming thunder of hoofs; saw a sudden vision of men, and horses, and uplifted sabres; was conscious of firing his last cartridge in the face of a dragoon who seemed to be bending over him in the act to strike—and after that remembered nothing more.

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AT THE BAR.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "A CRUISE UPON WHEELS," &c. &c.

CHAPTER XII. THE ART MYSTIC.

WE are not always most in earnest when we speak most gravely, nor is it by any means invariably the case that our meaning is a light one when we speak triflingly, and cover what we have to say with a joke. There are men whom nothing will induce to speak in a solemn tone, even when they are dealing with questions which, to themselves at least, are of vital importance. A man of this sort will speak of some great battle in which he has been engaged as a "nasty scrimmage," and as he seizes the shell which has fallen, but not yet exploded, and hurls it over the battlements, will very likely address the terrible missile with some slang phrase, as if he were dealing with a schoolboy's firework. Mr. Julius Lethwaite was a man of this sort.

The news brought by Jonathan Goodrich, and communicated by him to his employer in the dining-room—while Mr. Scroop occupied his leisure as best he might in the sanctum—was of the most startling and disquieting sort, and the old clerk was not always able to control his emotion as he told his tale. Owing to the continued indifference manifested by Mr. Lethwaite as to all matters of business, and his obstinate determination not to interfere in his own affairs except by deputy, and through the agency of Mr. Goodrich, it had come to pass that the acting partner in "Lethwaite and Gamlin" had managed to possess himself of an undue influence in the management of the concern, and did, indeed, pretty much as he liked. There is no substitute to be found in this world for personal supervision. The eye of the master must be over every work that is to prosper, and the deputed authority which Jonathan Goodrich sought to exercise on behalf of his chief would not do. While Lethwaite drummed at home, or consulted Mr. Cornelius Vampi in his observatory, poor old Jonathan strove hard to look after his interests in the City, but strove to little purpose. Mr. Gamlin was too much for him. He had bought his way into the firm with the conviction that he was to be the managing partner, and he meant to be so, and was.

Now this gentleman had been very much tempted by certain American investments which had come in his way, and had (as it will be remembered was hinted by old Goodrich on a former occasion) dabbled in them to an alarming extent. He had gone out of his way, too, to make large purchases of cotton, and this even to a greater extent than Goodrich himself was aware of. Then came a panic. Men began to talk gloomily about American securities, and of the impossibility of getting cotton from the Southern States if there should be a blockade of their ports. And all this time the old clerk was constantly coming to his master with entreaties that he would take some active part in the management of affairs so nearly concerning him, and beseeching him to stir before it was too late. One such interview we have already described, and it will serve as a specimen of many others. Mr. Lethwaite was not a man of business, and nothing—not even self-interest, the motive which he always spoke of as the sole instigator of all human action—could make a man of business of him. And now the crisis, so long prophesied of by poor old Goodrich, had come. The tidings which came by each American mail were worse and worse, and at length it had come to pass that on one fine Monday morning Mr. Gamlin had not made his appearance at the office in the City, and that on inquiry made at his private house, it transpired that he had not been seen or heard of since the previous Saturday afternoon. Further examination into the affairs of the firm went to prove that this gentleman had, previous to his departure, collected into his own hands all outstanding debts, and drawn out every penny standing at the banker's in the name of Lethwaite and Gamlin, besides turning every security on which he could lay his hands into hard money. This done, he had disappeared.

And this was the news which the poor old clerk had come to break—he hardly knew how—to his employer, on the occasion when he had found him, as we have seen, so busy with his musical studies, that he could hardly be got to attend to the old man's tale. He had got used to "Jonathan's panics," as he used to call them, and thought at first that this was only one of the series, and it was long, even after he had succeeded in getting his master's ear, before Goodrich could make him believe what it was that had happened, and that Mr. Gamlin had shown himself so little under the influence of

self-interest, as to be guilty of the extreme folly of turning out a rogue.

When the evil news was at length brought completely home to him, one of the very first things he had said was this:

"My poor old Jonathan, what will become of you?"

We have seen how lightly this blow fell upon Julius Lethwaite. Perhaps he did not perfectly realise it. Perhaps his very incapacity for business did him service here. He had vague ideas that it would "all come right." He had heard of so many instances of people "under a cloud," as it was called, for a time, and then emerging again not so much the worse for that temporary overshadowing. He had known men obliged to give up their establishments, and live very quietly for a time, and till they could tide over certain business embarrassments, who had still kept on, and managed to emerge at last, right side uppermost. But the old clerk shook his head. They would keep things quiet, and go on as long as they could. The head clerk was a very superior man, and those two would work and do all they could, but still he had little hope. It did not matter for him so much; if things came to the worst he had saved a little money, and he could most likely get other employment. But with Mr. Julius it was different. He had been used to luxury, had never known what it was to do without anything that he wanted. What was he to do?

And when our cynical friend was alone he did for a moment think of these things, but, as has been said, hardly understanding them. He had a vague idea that he ought to do something. He looked round his room, and thought that he must certainly, at any rate, reduce his expenditure. He saw all the luxurious things that surrounded him, and summed up what they were worth; the pictures, the plate, the china, and knick-knacks. He called to mind the enormous rent that he was paying, and determined that that must be reduced at once, and that he must make a move to less fashionable quarters. He even sat down at once and wrote a letter giving warning to his landlord, and he felt as if he were quite doing business, and perhaps even was not without some sense of enjoyment.

Then he got up and took a spell at the drums again, and finding that he got on better, began to reflect upon what his friend Scroop had told him of the earnings to be made out of that instrument. Finally, he reflected that since the predictions of Mr. Vampi had been in this particular case so wonderfully verified, he could not do better than go and tell him about it.

Cornelius Vampi sat in his observatory deeply engaged in study. It was evening, and he had had a busy day of it. To judge by appearances, his labours had been of a mixed character, partly medical and partly astrological. For besides the papers which lay before him, and with which he was now engaged—besides the books and the globe, all evidently recently in use, there was a small fire alight in the chemist's stove, and various vessels used in the concoction of medicine stood about, some full, some empty, some heated, some allowed to get cold, while in a great earthen jar close at hand were quantities of herbs, still damp and smoking, from which all the virtue had been extracted, and which were waiting Mr. Smaggsdale's leisure to be thrown away. Other members of the same family were placed in convenient positions ready for use.

Mr. Smaggsdale was certainly not at leisure just now. Surrounded by pots and pans and earthenware pipkins, he was engaged, under his master's direction, in watching the different preparations as they simmered and bubbled through different stages, ready, when the "moment of projection" arrived, to proclaim the fact, in order that the adept himself might take advantage of the important crisis when his drugs should be in the fittest state for combination with each other. So "old Smagg" had to keep constantly on the look-out, prying and peering into the different vessels one after another, now lifting a cover with caution, now tilting a lid so as to modify the heat of the liquid which it covered, removing this compound into a cooler place, and that to a warmer, adding a little distilled water here, and a pinch of herbs there, and stirring with a wooden spoon everywhere.

His master had evidently deputed all this inferior kind of labour to "old Smagg," with perfect confidence in his will and ability to discharge it. The philosopher himself kept to his papers, occupied with such mental exercise as he could trust nobody but himself to engage in. He had had a busy day of it, as has been said, and besides his ordinary work in the shop, had had visits respectively from an old lady, who believed, as did Vampi himself, in an elixir of youth—at which, indeed, Mr. Smaggsdale was then at work—and also from a young lady, who had brought back her horoscope in disgust, and not liking her destiny, had requested *to have it altered*. The astrologer had replied, with some show of reason, that he did not profess to construct destinies to order, but only to transmit to those who sought his services, the revelations which he was able to read in the heavenly bodies. On hearing this, the young lady had cast, as it were, her destiny from her, and falling back upon incredulity, had torn her written fate to pieces before the astrologer's eyes, saying that the young man bestowed upon her by the document was not "her sort," and finally expressing her belief that our philosopher was little better than an impostor.

The infamous accusation seemed to glance off our great man without harming him. Nay, he could even afford to treat the calumny with ridicule.

"An impostor, Smagg," he said, smiling benignantly, as he addressed himself to his colleague. "That's what the wench called me. We must remember that, Smagg."

Mr. Smaggsdale had newly come from an interview with his wife, in the course of which the good lady, hearing from her husband of the

epithet bestowed on the astrologer by this irreverent young woman, had endorsed it with the greatest energy. Fresh from his wife's tirade, old Smagg, who, as we know, had no opinions of his own, was, for the time, in somewhat a sceptical mood, and he had not been long enough among the retorts and crucibles for the influence of the observatory to react upon his credulity. So he confined himself to his own immediate occupation, and holding the lid of one of the pipkins in his hand, and peering into the vessel to which it belonged, he said: "It's on the bile, master."

"I am sorry for that poor girl, Smagg. I could have told her much that it would have been well for her to know."

"It will bile in another minute," resumed Smagg.

"Remove it to a little distance, and let it simmer for half an hour," replied his master. "Do you know, Smagg," he continued after a while, leaning back in his chair, and seeming to expand in a sense of his own exaltation, "I feel at times as if I should shortly be able to see into futurity merely by an act of the will, and without having recourse to the stars at all."

Mr. Smaggsdale, in his transitional state of belief, did not seem to know what to say to this, so he merely replied:

"Ah, that *would* be nice."

"The very future of the human race seems sometimes to be spread out before me, Smagg," continued the philosopher, without noticing this prosaic remark. "With the advance of time, and the progress of education, I believe that it will get gradually better and better, and wiser and wiser, and at the same time more and more practical. I should not wonder if a time were to come, for instance, when people ceased to say 'Good morning' at meeting, or 'Good night' at separating for the evening, saying to themselves, 'So and so will not have a better morning or a better night for my saying these words, nor will he fare the worse for my leaving them unsaid.' On the same principle the lawyer may abandon one day his wig, the lord mayor his mace, and the common council-man his gown. Then as to war, Smagg, do you mean to tell me that that madness can go on much longer? Why, such engines of offence and defence will be invented by modern ingenuity as will shortly render it impossible. We have got rid of the duello, Smagg, which is a battle between man and man; and war, which is only a duello between nations instead of individuals, must follow. Public opinion settles which man is right in the case of a private quarrel, and public opinion will settle which side is right in a quarrel between nations. It gets more influence every day, and as to the man who will not listen to it, why, society will have nothing to say to him, and that is a punishment which he can't bear. Oh, there are wonderful times coming, Smagg. I don't say that you or I will live to see them; their full development we certainly shall *not* live to see unless one of us is the Wandering Jew."

"And that's not me, sir," interposed Smagg, beginning, under the influence of all this prophesying, to yield his belief.

"Very well, then, you can only hope to see the beginning of the great times, Smagg; but the beginning you may see, and then you'll find that my words are confirmed, and then you'll believe."

"Oh, sir, don't imagine for a moment that I *don't* believe."

"You vacillate, old Smagg; you know you vacillate, at times."

"Ah, sir," replied the old man, in the tone of one who deprecates well-merited wrath, "it's only for a moment now and then. Do you never doubt yourself, when the things don't happen as you've foretold them?"

"*I* doubt!" cried his master. "Doubt the influence of the stars! Doubt the sublime theories that great minds have, after years of study, so painfully and laboriously eliminated from a continuous contemplation of the movements and combinations of the heavenly bodies? Why, Smagg, what are you talking about? And what do you mean, pray, by talking about 'things not happening as I've foretold them?' When was that, Smagg? When was that?"

"Oh, sir, I didn't mean any offence."

"Offence! no; I know you didn't. But what did you mean?"

"Well, sir, for instance, just now, there was the young woman who wouldn't have her horoscope at any price. She said it was all wrong."

The wrath of Cornelius rose at this to a pitch almost of sublimity.

"You miserable, hesitating funkard," he burst out, coining a word in the fury of the moment. "What! Influenced by the opinion of that insensate lump of idiotcy which—I do not say *who* but *which*—has just left us? What! You would set the reckless assertion of that profane wretch against the dicta (the deliberate opinions) of one who has devoted his life to study and research! But you had better go on a step further, in endorsing the opinions of that enlightened personage, and call me as she did—an impostor!"

"Oh, sir, don't. You make me shudder."

"Shudder on, you child of Saturn, and may the evil influences of that dark and sinister planet, under which you were, as the poet has it, 'littered,' descend upon you unmitigated by the protecting interposition of any less malignant celestial influences. For shame, Smagg, for shame! To think that I should have lived to see the day when the very flesh and blood that I have nourished turns against me, and joins with a sordid scullion to brand me with the title of impostor!"

Poor old Smagg was firm in his belief again now. The matrimonial influence was weak; that of the philosopher was in the ascendant, and he was full of remorse.

"Oh, Mr. Vampi, sir," he cried, "forgive me. It was only a slip of the tongue, and it was but for a moment. I know it was foolish and ungrateful too, to be in doubt even *for* a

moment. I know that you're right, sir, and that if things don't come as you say, it's the things' fault, and not yours. I know that you can read the stars, and make out what they're up to with a mere cock of the telescope here. I know that you can do what you like with them, and that when Venus is breaking into the bloody house of Mars, or Jupiter is up to some dreadfulness in his second chamber, that you can come forward and get Orion to tackle them with his belt, or Saturn to enclose them with his ring, or some other lady or gentleman to interfere and make things all square again. Oh yes, sir, I'm aware of all this, and how you forewarned me when Pisces was dead against me, and how the fish-bone stuck in my throat that very day, and I was near to choking. I've seen the very stars wink as you've looked at them, sir; and the ivinly bodies come out from behind a cloud when you've been in wants of them. And I've seen you overcome by evil influences, too; and I remember the day when Mercury was one too many for you, and you said you was sure he'd play you a trick, and, sure enough, that very evening the telescope fell down with a crash and broke every bit of glass in its body. Oh yes, sir, I've known all these wonderful things, and have had experience of 'em, and yet at times the unbelieving fit will come upon me strong and make a beast of me in spite of all the advantages I have had. But, sir, it ain't my fault, I do assure you, and if ever such a thing should happen again—which, if possible, it shan't—I do entreat and hope, with all my heart, that you'll believe that Saturn—under whom I was a-littered—is at fault, and that it is all his doings, sir, and none of mine."

This extraordinary profession of faith and jargon of second-hand astrology seemed to appease our philosopher to some extent, and master and man were both settling down again to their respective occupations, when a knock came at the door, and Mr. Julius Lethwaite entered the sanctum.

"Ah, Mr. Lethwaite, glad to see you, sir," said the astrologer. "I've been looking into your affairs up there," and he pointed to the skylight, "and I don't like the look of them still. But how are you, sir? You don't look quite the thing."

"Oh yes, I'm all right enough: a little weighed down, as usual, by a sense of the corruptness of human nature; but I'm used to that. And so you still don't like the look of my prospects?"

"No, sir, I don't," replied the sage. "It's no use my saying I do if I don't, is it?"

"Not a bit," said the other, carelessly. "And you can't hold out any better prospect for the future?" he continued.

"Not for the present, sir," was the reply. "But we must hold on, sir, and be hopeful. You've got some good friends up there," and he again pointed towards the skylight, "as well as some fierce enemies, and so I say we must hope."

Mr. Lethwaite was silent for a time, and sat staring in an absent manner at the adept, as if he had really hardly noticed before what a remarkable individual this was with whom he had come in contact. It was a warm night rather, and the little room was made especially hot by the stove at which old Smagg was cooking his herbs. Cornelius had taken off his coat—his flesh alone kept him warm enough, he said—and was puffing and blowing over his studies, red-hot with the exertion, and with his jolly face suffused with perspiration. Every now and then he threw his huge form back in his chair with a gasp, making the fabric creak again as if it must give way. At such times, too, he would take the opportunity of mopping his brow with his handkerchief, and would emerge from behind it, looking happier, and smiling more radiantly than ever.

"And this is the man," thought our cynic to himself, "who consumes the midnight oil in study. This is the 'pale student' who wears himself out in profound speculations concerning the unseen world; who would fain pry into futurity and extort their secrets from those mysterious planets which whirl above our heads. It is inconceivable."

Lethwaite sat staring at the adept in speechless astonishment for some time, and then, when next the philosopher leant back in his chair to take breath, said abruptly:

"You make some good guesses, Vampi, sometimes."

"Ah, Mr. Lethwaite, the old phrase again—guesses."

"Yes; and, curiously enough, they've turned out right in my case. I've come to grief."

"What do you mean?" asked the philosopher, laying down his papers, and pushing his spectacles up upon his forehead.

"I mean what I say," replied Lethwaite. And with that he proceeded to lay before the astrologer some of the circumstances relating to the present embarrassment of his affairs, and the future difficulties in which he was likely to be involved, with which the reader is already acquainted.

It was impossible to ignore the fact that as this recital went on an expression of something very like triumph became developed upon the countenance of our corpulent astrologer. Now and then he would even direct a glance towards old Smagg, who was still at work at the stove, which glance said, as plainly as eyes can speak, "I hope you hear this, and observe its bearing on what we were talking of just now." No doubt—for our philosopher was a good fellow at heart—no doubt he was sorry for the misfortunes which threatened his friend, but still, what a thing to have his predictions come true; what a thing to have them borne out by facts!

Mr. Lethwaite did not fail to observe the condition of self-complacency into which the great man had fallen. Here was a case of motive for him. "He is actually glad of my misfortunes," he said to himself, "because through them his prophesies are verified."

"Well, sir," began Cornelius, when he had heard all, "I'm extremely sorry for what has occurred—grieved, I may say; still you must remember that we've no reason to despair, having some good friends among the planets to espouse our interests. But, sir, you'll allow me, in the mean time, to make one observation —I do hope, after this, that you'll not talk again about guesses."

Lethwaite had opened his mouth to reply, when there came a low tap at the door, which was then opened a very little way, and a voice was heard to pronounce in a hoarse whisper the dissyllable,

"Smaggsdale."

The gentleman thus appealed to got up from his place, and, shuffling across the room, went out for a moment, and, after holding a whispered conference with some one outside, reappeared, and, closing the door behind him, uttered these words:

"It's my wife, sir."

"Well, and what does she want?" asked the philosopher.

"It's the lady, sir."

"What lady?" asked Cornelius again. He had hardly collected his faculties.

"The strange lady, sir. Mrs. Smaggsdale wants to know if she shall send her away?"

"Not by any means—not by any means," answered the astrologer, getting up and putting on his coat. "I'll come down directly."

Mr. Vampi stretched and wriggled himself into his coat with considerable effort, having previously, out of a feeling of intense deference to the sex, a member of which he was about to confront, arranged his scant hair with a pocket-comb before a scrap of looking-glass which stood in a corner of the room. Mr. Lethwaite could not repress a smile as he witnessed this small ceremonial act; but it must be owned that, if the smile was meant to be a cynical one, it was a distinct failure.

CHAPTER XIII. THE STRANGE LADY.

Cornelius Vampi was no ordinary fortune-teller. The vulgar arts of reading the future prospects of his clients by means of palmistry, or by the combinations to be made with a pack of cards, were altogether beneath him. Indeed, his feeling with regard to all such practices was something more than negative. He looked upon them as sacrilegious—as bringing discredit on a great cause. "What," he would say, "read a man's future by consulting the marks upon his hand! Lines which can be affected by the habits of his body, by the use he makes of his limbs, as he grows to maturity. The peasant-boy who handles the plough will, by its use, acquire one set of lines, while the student, who is for ever writing or turning over the leaves of his beloved volumes, will have another. But these cannot show the future of his life; while, as to divination by the cards, it is even more vile and more vulgar still. An invention of man—a set of signs put together to please a foolish king of France; a thing that once was not; why, it is preposterous! But the stars," quoth Cornelius, gazing at them through the open window of his garret, "ah, with them it is widely different. Man has had no hand in their construction, nor can he by his strength or his wisdom affect their movements by the fraction of a degree. They can assist him, but he cannot influence them."

Strange to see that great ponderous creature, with his bulky frame, his florid countenance, and his mighty capacity for enjoyment, leaning against the framework of his open window, rapt in contemplation of those wondrous bodies which live in that eternity of space to whose extremity our gaze tries vainly to penetrate. That window was to him so much. It seemed to give him access to another world. Yes, this house, whose foundation was laid in the dirt, rose, as it seemed to this strange man, to the very gates of heaven. Not more superior in his eyes was a man's head, in which such glorious thoughts and noble aspirations dwell, to his feet, that are for ever in contact with the mire, than was the upper region of that poor dwelling-place of his to that lower part which came in contact with the very mud and sewage of the town.

Who can tell what that window was to Cornelius Vampi? It was a link between him and the heavens, between the terrestrial and the celestial worlds. The town in which our enthusiast lived, the squalid neighbourhood which surrounded him, could not spoil his prospect from that window, nor take away from the splendour of that scenery which he loved so well to look upon. That celestial scenery was everything to this man; and not the Chaldean peasant, who gazes on the heavenly bodies as he lies out upon his native plains, had more free access to the gods of his idolatry than had Cornelius Vampi in his London garret.

What do we, who are entirely reasonable, know of such happiness as was enjoyed by this enthusiast? He had a great faith. He knew no anxieties. His life was pure. It never crossed his mind to fear that he should have less to live upon than his daily wants necessitated. His business was a good one, and brought him all that he required. His astrological studies were outside and beyond it altogether, for it must never be supposed that these were profitable to our philosopher. Not one penny did Vampi gain by his vaticinations. Not from his richest clients, not from Lethwaite himself, in his most prosperous days, had Vampi ever taken money. These things were too sacred in his eyes to be made subservient to lucre. When he predicted the events which the future had in store for a rich man, or cast the horoscope of a servant-wench, he was engaging in a solemn act, to associate which with gain would have been nothing less than a crime. He would have expected the power which he believed dwelt in him to have deserted him if he had thought of such a thing. To believers, to those who consulted him gravely and in earnest,

what he had to give was given freely, and for nothing.

And let no one suppose that Vampi was an impostor. An impostor is one who, with an eye to profit, or, at any rate, to his own advancement in some way or other, professes a thing in which he does not really believe. Now, Vampi believed. He was in many respects a child, and he was a child in his belief in those occult arts to which he was devoted. He had this great and rare quality of belief to a most wonderful and comforting extent, and this it was that made him so completely the oracle of the poor people in his neighbourhood. He believed in the advice which he himself gave. He believed in his own drugs, in his herbs, and his corn-plaisters. And so, in like manner, he had confidence in the horoscopes which he cast, and in those strange house-breaking propensities which, in the parlance adopted by the astrological fraternity, are so freely attributed to the different planets.

That visit of Julius Lethwaite to the philosopher which was described in the last chapter, left Cornelius in a high state of triumph. It was not often that such rapid success followed his labours. It was not often that his predictions were fulfilled in such a remarkable manner as they had been in the case of our cynical friend. It was too often the case that counter-influences would get to work and make his prophecies break down in the most grievous fashion. But here was a case in which he had predicted a great danger, nay, had almost specified it, and had bidden him over whom that danger hung to exercise an especial care and caution, if possible to avert it. And upon this man whom he had thus forewarned, suddenly, and almost immediately after the prediction had been uttered, behold there had fallen heavy losses, and great trouble had come upon him. "It is prodigious," said Cornelius, "and, except for the poor gentleman's own sake, eminently satisfactory." For though our philosopher was an entire believer in his predictions, as has been said, he believed in them and in his art, perhaps, even more fully when those predictions came true than when they did not. For Vampi was human.

"I wonder why I could not tell him the precise nature of what he had to fear, but only that there *was* something. Ah, I shall be able to read more clearly soon, to see more and more distinctly."

It was immediately after Lethwaite had left him that our philosopher fell into this course of reflection. It will be remembered that he had been summoned to attend "the strange lady" in the shop below, but had forgotten all about it in the triumph of the moment. He now remembered that the lady was waiting, and was just leaving the sanctum to attend her, when he encountered the faithful Mr. Smaggsdale on the stairs. He had come up to remind his patron that the lady was getting impatient.

"She said she was to see you particular to-night, and that you know it," said Mr. Smaggsdale.

"Yes, it's all right. I'm going down now."

"The other party about the elixir of youth was here to-day. She says she's taken one bottle, and that it hasn't done much for her; for that she met an old acquaintance of forty years' standing in the street, and he said, 'Ah, ma'am, you and I both begin to show our years,' and she ain't best pleased."

"Ah, she must have patience, Smagg—she must have patience," said the philosopher, as he descended the stairs.

The strange lady was waiting for him in the shop. She had taken up her accustomed position in the darkest corner that was to be found, and the furthest away from the door. She had even got the stuffed alligator between her and the light, and his shadow fell upon her. She was dressed as usual, her veil was closely folded over her face, and her figure was greatly concealed by the folds of her dark woollen shawl.

She was standing, impatiently tapping the counter, as people do when they are kept waiting, and when Cornelius at length appeared, she seemed to reproach him for having been so long in coming to her. Then the usual transaction took place between them, she handing to him something wrapped in paper, and he retiring to the back shop, and reappearing with a similar package, which he handed to her with a bow, and addressing to her some words, spoken in an under tone.

"And now, madam," he added, aloud, "if you'll follow me, I'll show you the way to my observatory, where we can talk of matters of a more spiritual sort." And so saying, he led the way to where there was a division in the counter, and lifting a portion of it which moved upon hinges, he made way for the lady to pass behind. Then he opened the door at the back, which gave access to the staircase, and they both ascended together.

The lady had to pause more than once on the way up, and when she at length reached the sanctum, was very much out of breath.

"You are in weak health," said the philosopher, speaking gently to her. "Those stairs ought not to have distressed you so much. Look at me!" And he stood before her as calm and unmoved as if he had just risen from an easy-chair, and his breath came as quietly as that of a sleeping child.

"Ah, you are used to it," said the lady; and she began to look about the strange place, and to examine it with an appearance of curiosity.

"What a curious room," she said, as she warmed her hands at the stove. "It is like the laboratory of some alchemist. Do you seek for the philosopher's stone?"

"No, madam. I do no such mad thing as that," replied our herbalist. It was a curious thing in his character that he would have nothing to say to alchemy, and, indeed, treated its pretensions with contempt.

He had seated himself by this time in his accustomed place, and got out his papers and instruments, and with these he busied himself for a while, muttering all sorts of incoherent words from time to time, and writing down a great many unintelligible and cabalistic signs upon paper. He referred, too, to different calendars, and other documents already written out on parchment, and to some papers covered with strange signs and drawings, figures of animals, birds and fishes, extraordinary combinations of circles one within another, mathematical figures, and numbers without end. Over these he pored for a long time, appearing to be exceedingly puzzled and perplexed by his studies. At last he pushed up his spectacles upon his forehead, and, heaving a deep sigh, which was a very unusual proceeding with him, leaned back in his chair and fixed his eyes upon his companion.

"I have never had such difficulty with anything," he said, after a while, "as with the attempt to read your future. Ever since you gave me the first necessary particulars, I have been trying to arrive at some certain conclusion, and have been unable to do so. Are you sure that the year, day, and hour of your birth were given me accurately? The slightest mistake would throw everything out."

"They were accurate," answered the lady. "I can answer for them."

"It is so strange," continued Cornelius. "I can go a certain distance. I have told you, as you admit, particulars connected with your girlhood and subsequent life up to this time—particulars which I could only know by means of my art."

"They were all correct," said the lady; "though, I thought, somewhat vague."

"Vague!" repeated the astrologer. "What would you have? 'De minimis non curat lex;' and, in like manner, you would not have the sublime science of astrology become a thing of trivial detail. It condescends not to small matters. It gives forth its hints in mystic language—a language intelligible only to the adept."

"And, as I understand you," replied the lady, "even the adept is now puzzled; and my destiny is revealed in characters which even the initiated cannot decipher! How is that?"

"There were stormy influences at work, madam, at the time of your birth," said the philosopher, evading, for a time, the lady's question; "and, as I have had the honour of submitting to you, those influences were sure to have power over your whole life."

"And how about its termination?" asked the strange lady, abruptly, and with a certain tremor in her voice.

"Of that, at present, I know nothing."

"'At present;' and when are you likely to know more?"

"Whenever I am able to see more clearly than I can do at present."

"And when is that likely to be?"

"That, madam, I cannot say," answered the astrologer.

These words were followed by a silence of some duration. The astrologer seemed to be occupied in pondering over something that he wished to say. He referred again to his papers; and then he held his head in his hands, and with closed eyes and a puckered brow seemed to be engaged in straining that spiritual sight, which, when we seek to use, we mechanically suspend the action of our bodily eyes, as if the mental sight and the corporeal could not be exercised simultaneously.

"It seems," said the astrologer, speaking slowly, in a low key, and without altering his position or opening his eyes—"it seems as if I had embarked on a journey, had pursued it a certain distance—a considerable distance, even—as if the road, winding through obscure valleys sometimes, and sometimes over rugged by-paths and ill-defined ways, had reached at last a place where it was no longer marked at all, and beyond which I seek in vain to pursue it. I have come to the edge of some steep declivity, down which I look in vain for the track which I have lost, and all beyond is darkness. I have had no such experience before. I have seen things vaguely before. I have seen shapes and forms of which I could make no certain thing, and then beyond I have again seen clearly. But now I can see nothing at all. I use all the skill I know, and endeavour, with all the resources I have at command, to throw some light forward into this dark abyss. A barrier seems to erect itself even now as I gaze between me and the future. The stars throw no light here—not even an uncertain one—and all is darkness!"

Again there was silence. The astrologer's eyes were closed no longer now, and he seemed as one who had woke up from some trance.

"You own yourself defeated?" asked the strange lady.

"For the time I do," answered Cornelius. "It may be that I am not just now in good health. It may be that my eyes are wearied with straining into darkness; and that hereafter my mental vision may become clearer. At present, I can see nothing."

"Then, there is nothing that need detain me longer?" asked the lady.

"Nothing—except that I have a favour to ask of you," answered Cornelius. "I feel—it may be a fancy—but I feel as if I could engage in this work with more confidence if—if——"

"If what?"

"If you would let me see your face."

The lady answered not a word, but raised her veil, and, putting it back, stood before the astrologer motionless as a statue.

Cornelius looked long and earnestly at her. "Thank you," he said very gently, "that is enough." And he took the lamp to light her down the stairs. "If you could come again very shortly," he said, "I might know more—to-morrow, perhaps, or the day after."

"It shall be the day after," said the strange lady.

"The day after to-morrow, then," said Vampi.

MILITARY PUNISHMENTS.

As an old non-commissioned officer of twenty-five years' service, I may be allowed to say my say respecting military punishments in the English army. I have gone through the ordeal of barrack-room life, and know what it is to be punished as well as rewarded in the army. Nor am I ignorant as to what produces the more serious crimes we read of being committed in the army. When Major de Vere was murdered the other day, there was hardly a man or woman in all England that was not horrified at reading the details of this fearful crime in the papers. In common justice to the soldiers of the army, I must say that the indignation of the rank and file throughout the empire was quite equal to that of any other class. In every regiment, every troop, and every company, the fearful crime which Currie had committed was loudly expressed and sincerely felt by the soldiers of even the humblest rank. It cannot be denied that every corps in the service contains many thoughtless, careless, drunken, and vicious men. Considering the class from which our army is chiefly recruited, this cannot be wondered at. But it is one thing to be a loose, or even bad, soldier, and another to be a murderer. Men may grumble at the discipline of the regiment; complain of the never ending routine of duty; be annoyed, and even angry, at the way in which they are occasionally spoken to by some few officers, who seem to think that it is impossible to maintain their power over men unless they address them like dogs. But to dip one's hands in blood—to murder an officer coolly and deliberately as private Currie did in Brompton barracks—is a crime of which, thank God, there are but very few men even amongst the very worst of our worst soldiers would contemplate for a moment.

Still it cannot be denied but that the serious military offence of striking non-commissioned officers, and even occasionally of attempting the lives of superiors, is becoming more common than it was in the English army. Formerly, even the comparatively trivial offence of wilful direct disobedience of orders was rare in the service, but now it is daily getting more prevalent. Bad conduct in a regiment, troop, or company, does not, however, spread like the cattle disease in a herd of bullocks. When soldiers have passed through their drill, they generally take their stand for good or bad amongst their companions. In every barrack-room there are the really good soldiers who take a pride in their work, and like to be as smart as possible in their duty. Then, again, there are what I may call the medium soldiers, men who are neither very good nor extremely bad, and who get over their work with a certain amount of grumbling, although they still do get through it. Lastly, there are the men who are altogether bad, whose names are seldom out of the defaulters' book, and who, whenever they have a little money in their pockets, invariably get drunk. Of these there is a degree worse still: the sullen bad violent men: soldiers who have, or believe themselves to have, a grievance against the whole army in general, and against their own officers in particular. These are few in number, but it is from among the few that our military prisons are filled, and, when serious crime is committed, the criminals are always from the ranks of this particular class.

How is it that, with so few incentives to bad behaviour, and so many inducements to good conduct, there are soldiers given to violent crimes? I attribute most of this evil to the military punishments we have in the English army. When a soldier commits himself seriously, for the first time even, his punishment is invariably one which so degrades him, in the eyes of both himself and his comrades, that he does not care, and does not try, ever to redeem his character. And when he advances in crime—when he gets so hardened as almost to glory in the very shame of what he knows to be wrong—the penalty he has to pay for his offences serves to strengthen still more his evil resolves, and causes him to walk, as it were, in military disgrace for the rest of his days.

Let me relate a case in point. I have served in several regiments. One of them was a very crack hussar regiment, which was stationed for twelve months and more at Hounslow, near London. I was troop sergeant-major of E troop in that corps. In the same troop was a young fellow named Vincent, who had enlisted about a year previously, when we were quartered at Manchester. Vincent was a fine young soldier, and a good-hearted lad as ever lived. For more than twelve months after he joined us, that man was never reported even to a sergeant, far less to his captain or the colonel. But soon after we got to Hounslow, Vincent became entangled with a young woman, who was certainly a great deal worse than she ought to have been. More than once, he came home at night very drunk; but the sergeant of his squad was a good-hearted man, and as the lad always went to bed quiet enough, he managed never to report him. I often gave the young man a little private advice to shake off his female companion, to keep closer to his duty, and more clear of drink; but it was of no use. At last, one day when the trumpet sounded for "stables" at eleven o'clock, Vincent was so drunk that the orderly sergeant of his troop was obliged to send him to the guard-room. Next day he was brought up to the orderly-room. Our old colonel, who was a most kind-hearted, though a very strict officer, happened to be away on a fortnight's leave, and the prisoners were taken before the major: a very young man for the rank he held, and who never could open his mouth to a soldier without an oath or a word of abuse.

Like some other officers in the English army, he thought that this detestable habit showed signs of manliness and officer-like qualities. When Vincent was brought up before him, he had not long held the rank of major, and this was the first time he had ever presided at the orderly-room. No sooner had the complaint against the prisoner, "drunk at stables," been read out by the adjutant, than the major opened a torrent of abuse against him, which so taunted Vincent that he was mad enough to reply to the major in the most insolent manner. As a soldier, I could but condemn the man's act, though, as a man, I am bound to confess that, under similar circumstances, I should, in all probability, have done the same. The major ordered him to be tried by a regimental court-martial for "being drunk at stables," and for "insolent and insubordinate conduct to his superior officer." The court sat the same forenoon; the prisoner, who by this time had had leisure to repent and recollect himself, pleaded "guilty." He was sentenced to receive fifty lashes, and to be imprisoned in the cells for twenty-eight days. He was flogged that afternoon before the whole regiment, and, when he went into the cells, his hair was, by order of the major, clipped so very close that he looked like an escaped convict. When his term of imprisonment was over, he joined the troop again, but he was an altered man. No evil spirit had been flogged out of him, but seven spirits more, worse than the first, had been flogged into him. A more utterly useless, worthless soldier I never saw. If he had a shilling in his pocket, and an hour's leave into town, he managed to return drunk. He lived in the cells and the guard-room, much more than in the barrack-room. At last the quantity of spirits and beer he drank, had such an effect upon him, that he really was seldom quite sober. One day, not drunk, but half muddled with drink, he turned out very dirty for a foot parade in Island Bridge Barracks, Dublin. The orderly-sergeant of his troop reproved him, and sent him to his room to brush his clothes, hair, and boots. The sergeant was not in the least to blame. But the wretched man, hardly knowing what he did, rushed at the sergeant, and, before he could be hindered, struck him two heavy blows in the face. He was overpowered in an instant, and sent to the guard-room, from which he only issued to be tried by a general court-martial, by which he was condemned to ten years' penal servitude. He is now working out his time at Portland. I am quite sure that, if at the commencement of his folly this Vincent had met with kind but firm treatment, he would have reformed, and would have risen to be a good soldier. He was one of the handsomest young fellows I ever saw, and, when mounted, was the picture of an English hussar. I went to see him on the day when he was sent up to London to be made over to the civil power; and he told me that the lash had caused him to form a deep-seated resolution never to behave well again, and always to give as much trouble as he possibly could.

I am not only quite sure that no soldier was ever reformed by the lash—that not only have good men become bad after its infliction, and that no bad man ever became good after being flogged—but I am also equally convinced that the sight of this punishment is very far indeed from being a wholesome example. The non-commissioned officers of a regiment hear and see a very great deal of which the commissioned officers are in utter ignorance. In the English army there are so very few officers who have been promoted from the ranks, that between the officers' and sergeants' mess-rooms there is a gulf which it is almost impossible to span. However well meaning and professionally zealous an officer may be, he knows nothing whatever of the feelings or the opinions—the prejudices, if you like—of the men he commands. There is an idea among officers that the example of the lash is good, and will deter many from evil. I know as a fact that the exact contrary is the case. I never yet heard even the best-behaved soldiers say among themselves that any man condemned to be flogged had deserved his sentence. But I have heard, not once, twice, nor a dozen times during my long term of service, but every time a soldier was tied up to the triangles, no matter how great a scoundrel he had been—no matter even if he had robbed his room-mates, which, in the soldier's code of laws and morality, is the greatest crime of which a man can be guilty—I have invariably heard his comrades, from the moment of his being condemned to be flogged, regard him as an object of the deepest pity.

But the lash is not the only punishment we have, which degrades a soldier to such an extent that he feels himself lost. When a man deserts, after he is caught he is very frequently (almost invariably) sentenced to be branded on the shoulder or back with the letter D. When I first joined the —th Light Dragoons (since transformed, as all light dragoon regiments have been, into the —th Hussars), the corporal of my squad was as gentlemanly a young man as you would wish to see. It was rare to meet with a young fellow of such good address and correct manners in the ranks of the English army. His father was a poor clergyman, and had not the means to buy him a commission, and so the lad enlisted into a cavalry regiment. He had a brother-in-law in London who was well-to-do in the world, and he obtained permission to spend ten days at Christmas (the regiment was then stationed in Dublin) with his relatives in the metropolis. The Christmas dinner was good, the wine was better, and one invitation to dinner followed another from the friends he met at his relative's. Whether he forgot his leave, or whether he got too much "on the spree," he over-stayed his leave by seven days—at the end of that time, returning to the Royal Barracks in Dublin, where he reported himself, and was put under arrest. He wrote out a statement, and showed how, though he had been guilty of over-staying his leave, he never for a moment intended to desert. But the colonel

thought otherwise. This was not the kind-hearted old gentleman who commanded us some six years later, but a gentleman who had very recently exchanged into our regiment from half-pay unattached. He ordered the corporal to be tried by a garrison court-martial, and this tribunal sentenced him to be imprisoned for three months, and to be "branded with the letter D in the usual manner," besides being reduced from the rank of corporal to that of a private dragoon. The sentence was carried out, and the unfortunate man never held up his head again. To drown care, he took to drinking, and in two years died of delirium tremens in the Belturbet Hospital, after having spent more days in, than out of, the regimental cells, and being tried more than once by a regimental court-martial for intoxication.

It is not of the actual severity of the punishments in the service that I or any soldier need complain. It is not a less severe but a less degrading code that is required in the army. There is hardly any punishment we have, which does not carry degradation with it to a certain extent. Thus, if a soldier is for some comparatively trivial offence ordered to be confined seven days in the cells, it is generally made a point to order his hair to be clipped so short, that for six weeks or two months after his punishment, he looks like a ticket-of-leave man just got free from jail. His punishment is ordered for, say a month, but it hangs about him for four or five months, as during all that time he is ashamed to uncover his head, and will not enter any public place where he would have to take his cap off, lest the shortness of his hair be observed and laughed at. In many of our large garrison towns side-locks are sold, which the soldier who has had his hair clipped close to his head on entering the cells, purchases, and attaches to the sides of his cap.

Another source of much crime in our army is the way in which some—not all, but still too many—officers address their men. It does not proceed from any wilful intention of hurting the feelings of the men so addressed, but from a silly idea that it denotes an officer-like bearing, and a strict disciplinarian. I have seen mere lads of seventeen or eighteen, who were yet under the hands of the riding-master and adjutant, speak to old soldiers who wore the Crimean and Indian medals on their breasts, as if they were really inferior beings to themselves. It is not so much *what* these commissioned youths say, as the *way in which they say it*. The fault is very seldom to be found among titled officers or men of undoubted good breeding. For, a true gentleman always respects the feelings of others, in the army as elsewhere.

My own experience in the army does not teach me that officers who have risen from the ranks, speak roughly, or behave ill to soldiers under their command. I have often seen it stated that they do, both in parliament and elsewhere, but I have never found it so.

The young men who join direct from home—the officers who merely go through an examination at Chelsea, and then are sent to learn their duties in the regiment, to which they should come to teach, and not have to be taught—often make the greatest possible blunders, and know nothing whatever of true work for at least two years after they have been receiving the Queen's pay and wearing the Queen's uniform. And these are almost invariably the very men who speak to soldiers in the harshest terms. I remember well a case of this sort a few years ago. In the regiment to which I belonged, there was a young cornet who had but lately joined, and who was, perhaps, as awkward a specimen of unfledged humanity as ever put on uniform. He had been months in the riding-school, but the riding-master could make nothing of him, and when at foot drill he was the despair of every instructor. At field-days he was quiet and civil-spoken, for he was in such mortal dread of his charger, that all his attention was given to keeping himself from falling off; but, at dismounted parades, he bullied the men of his troop whenever he had a chance: that is, whenever the captain was absent, and he commanded in his place. There was in the troop, a man called Benson—Bill Benson. Bill was one of the best riders in the British cavalry, and as fine a specimen of an English dragoon as ever was seen. He had been twenty-five years in the army, but had never been promoted; for he could barely read, and writing even his own name was, to poor Bill, as the unknown tongues. He had served in the Crimea, ridden in the famous Balaclava charge, and, when his regiment came home from Sebastopol, had volunteered to go out to India with a regiment ordered to that country at the time of the mutiny. Bill had two English medals as well as that given by Turkey for the Crimea upon his jacket, wore three good-conduct marks on his sleeve, and was looked upon as a pattern soldier. For some reason or other, the young cornet took a great dislike to Benson, and used to "naggle" him whenever he got a chance. There was a foot parade one afternoon, and, in his captain's absence, the cornet commanded the troop. In passing down the ranks, he thought he saw, or he pretended that he thought he saw, a spot of dirt upon Benson's pouch-belt, and asked him in the most bullying tone possible, "Why the devil he appeared on parade so dirty?" Now, to call Bill Benson dirty, was something like accusing Coutts's or Glynn's of being insolvent. Benson coloured, and replied respectfully enough that he had not seen the spot of dirt: which, by the way, was behind his shoulder, and not so big, after all, as the size of a large pin's head. The cornet told him to "hold his d——d tongue, and not to answer." Bill replied again, "I thought you asked me a question, sir." The man standing next to Bill began to titter at this, and the cornet ordered both men to the guard-room, where they were confined all night. In the morning, they were brought up before the commanding officer, charged with insolent conduct in the ranks. The colonel was a good officer and a man of judgment; he at

once saw the folly of which the cornet had been guilty, but he was obliged to uphold the authority of that officer. The latter magnified the offence as much as possible, and, to make a long story short, the colonel ordered Benson to be confined in the cells for seven days. The sentence was carried out, for, although the colonel gave the cornet several broad hints to beg the man off, he would not take them. From that day forward, Bill became one of the most careless soldiers in the regiment, and was never out of the defaulters' list. He took to drinking, lost his good-conduct marks, and was discharged about two years afterwards with a pension of threepence a day less than he would have had if the cornet had never got him into trouble. I don't defend his conduct for answering an officer in the ranks. I am too old a soldier for that. But I maintain that Bill's punishment was brought about quite as much by the irritating language of the cornet as by any fault of his own.

When I read in the papers how difficult it is now-a-days to induce men to enlist, or how many men take their discharge after their ten years are over, I am often tempted to take up my pen, and tell the Secretary at War, or his Royal Highness the Commander-in-Chief, some of my experiences. For stealing, repeated disobedience of orders, insolence to a superior, and such crimes, dismiss a soldier publicly and with great ignominy; if a man be careless, slothful, unwilling to do his duty, turn him out of the regiment shamefully; increase the pension a soldier can earn, to a shilling a day after fifteen years' service, and a penny a day for every subsequent year he is in the ranks; reduce the term of enlistment from ten years to seven; let every year in India, the West Indies, or any other bad climate, count as double time towards pension; do all this, and the country will never want recruits for the army, nor will many good soldiers leave the service after their first term of service is over.

The non-commissioned officers, in their way of addressing their men, are often as much to be blamed as the officers; and yet if they did otherwise, they would be set down by their superiors as wanting in smartness, and perhaps would never rise to higher rank. This is, however, the one great aim of many amongst the non-commissioned ranks, and is the cause of an immense deal of evil in the service. I have repeatedly heard corporals and sergeants speak to the men—or to some particular man upon whom, in the language of the barrack-room, they are "down"—in a manner that would not be tolerated in the humblest employment of civil life.

That the punishments of our army should be severe, I have already expressed my opinion; but I hold that they ought not to be so vexing to the men, nor so degrading as many of them now are. Even if a soldier has taken a glass too much, but is not on duty, and, when he returns to barracks, goes to bed quietly, why interfere with him? I have seen in some infantry regiments—in cavalry corps they are not so fidgety—an orderly corporal of each company at the barrack-gate, stationed there to observe and mark down the names of any men who returned in the least the worse for liquor. Very often the man was just drunk enough to be quarrelsome if meddled with; and, before he was captured, he would, perhaps, knock down the men of the guard, and use language the reverse of complimentary to his superiors in general, and the sergeant of the guard in particular. Here there would be a clear case for a court-martial; and the soldier would be sentenced to three or four months' imprisonment, and loss of any good-conduct marks he might have obtained in the service.

Extra drill, extra riding-school, and such-like punishments, should never be resorted to when it is possible to avoid them. Because the invariable effect of these is to make a soldier hate what he should take a pride in. I don't think we have any mode of punishment so good as what I have heard described in the French army as the salle de police. This is simply a place of detention, to which a soldier is ordered for one, two, three, or any number of days up to a month. The prisoners are kept together during a part of the day, but are not allowed to speak one to another. For refractory men I would have solitary cells, in which they might be confined at the discretion of the commanding officer, from one to fifteen days. If that did not bring them to their senses, it would be far cheaper to dismiss than to keep them. Our cumbersome machinery of military prisons I would abolish. They cost a very great deal, and do very little good. In these establishments the men are exercised at what is called shot drill—that is, a man has, in company with half a dozen or more of his fellow-prisoners, to lift and carry shot, by word of command, from one socket to another in the same square. The continual stooping, lifting the shot, stopping again to deposit it, facing about, marching a few steps, and then stooping again to renew the process, goes on for two hours at a time, with two out of fifteen minutes to rest. The drill takes place three times a day, and is so severe, that the men are perfect cripples for the first week or two, owing to the most intense agony from racking pains in the loins, legs, arms, and chest. The punishment is too severe for military offences, and not severe enough for deliberate crime. I have known many men ruined in health for the rest of their lives by five or six months of this work; but I never yet knew a soldier reformed by his sojourn in one of our military prisons. For the money these cost, or for less, I believe we might establish, in Canada or elsewhere, a regiment to which soldiers should be sent for the purpose of reforming them: thus giving them a chance of recovering themselves apart from their former comrades.

A great mistake is made in supposing that a soldier when off duty must at all times be perpetually steady, always sober, even staid. There are young men in our ranks, just as there are in the navy, or among any set of men. If

in a large garrison town, like Chatham, Portsmouth, Dublin, or Plymouth, or near the camps of Aldershot or the Curragh, half a dozen drunken soldiers are seen every night, civilians exclaim against the army, and cry what a drunken lot we are. But they might see four times the number of artisans or navvies the worse for liquor, and not say a word. Not two months ago, I happened to be standing at the Great Eastern Railway station in London when the train arrived from Colchester, and out of it got an infantry soldier, who, although quite able to look after himself, was certainly by no means sober. In five minutes he was surrounded by a score or more of people, looking, as he told them, "as if they never had seen a poor fellow the worse for liquor before." He found his way to a cab, and made off. Half an hour later, an excursion-train arrived, filled with a number of Foresters, or Odd Fellows, or other beings wearing aprons, badges, paper bands round their caps, and all the paraphernalia which free-born Britons are wont to parade on such occasions. Of the "Ancient Order" there present, I saw some two score in all the various stages of intoxication, from "slightly screwed" up to very drunk. But no one seemed to think it at all extraordinary that working men, when out on a very hot day, and for their one annual holiday, should take a little too much; though they had stared at the poor soldier with all their eyes, and made very frequent allusions to "those drunken fellows in the army." The same spirit prevails in our military rules and regulations, as well as in the Mutiny Act. They all appear to think that a soldier should, in his conduct, be little below an angel, and that the slightest failure in the path of duty should be visited with the utmost severity.

THE FENIANS.

We have to go very far back to discover anything about the true Fenians, who were a very different class of heroes from those who have been recently trying to revolutionise Ireland, and whose head-office must surely be in some Dublin Tooley-street. Some fourteen or fifteen hundred years ago, Ireland was distracted by the battles of two enormous clans, who represented both halves of it pretty fairly —the Clan Boisgne, which included the Leinster and Munster warriors, and the Clan Morna, those of the north. Morna sets us thinking of Ossian; and, indeed, the whole of that poem is strongly tinctured with Fenian colouring and manners. In these disturbances, figured Con of the Hundred Battles, Art the Melancholy, Cumhail (pronounced cool), and other poetically-named chiefs. The struggle was carried on by an enrolled standing army massed over the country in regular battalions, and called the Fionians. Finnians would be, therefore, a more correct representative of the Irish word than Feuians. "Cool," the father of "Fin," was killed in battle by a general called Goll, but who had a more showy name in "The Son of Morna," who was succeeded by young Fion, who became the famous Finn Mac-Cool.

Such a leader would have been invaluable at the present crisis. The origin is easily explained. He watched seven years at the Boyne for the Salmon of Knowledge, and when he had caught that invaluable fish (now-a-days the Fenian salmon are in deserved repute), his patience was rewarded by being appointed leader of the Fenians. Never was a simple act—in itself its own reward—so handsomely recompensed. Epicures might certainly wait seven days for a "cut" of Boyne salmon.

The strange body of men over which this youth was called to rule, were surprisingly disciplined. They are the men who wore those elegant and exquisite golden ornaments that are dug up now and again. Their proceedings were as chivalrous as King Arthur's court. The whole picture of those days, as displayed in the Irish poems and romances of the Ossianic period, are so rich in the colour of the figures, the dresses, decorations, actions, and exploits—so entertaining and amusing—that it is quite surprising they should not have attracted more attention from the general reader. The postulant was obliged to have certain physical qualifications, and "pass" satisfactorily in the following branches: He had to parry nine javelins *thrown at once*, with only a hazel stick. He had to run at full speed through a wood, and tie his hair up so as it should not come down. He was to run under a stick as low as his knee, and jump over a stick as high as his chin, while pursued at full speed by the examiners. He had to tread on a rotten stick without breaking it, and to pull a thorn out of his foot when running. He had to be musical, to write verses, and to recite poetry. He had to take an oath to relieve the poor, and never to offer an insult to a woman. Nothing more chivalrous than the Fenian behaviour to the "fair sex" can be conceived. Anything a lady ordered her lover to do, must be done—such as leaping across a fatal chasm. Finn was once required, by a lady he admired, to jump over a pillar as high as his own chin, with another pillar of the same height in the palm of his hand. He succeeded; but, in a private conversation with his father-in-law, he afterwards owned that it was the most ticklish thing he had ever attempted.

A Fenian had great privileges, as indeed such an accomplished fellow deserved to have. He was at free quarters wherever he went. Salmon, deer, and game of all sorts, were kept strictly for hunting and shooting. If a common fellow killed a stag, he had to replace it by an ox, and was well off if he did not fare worse. The Fenian knights had all sorts of accomplishments, were fond of playing chess, kept paid bards to sing to them, and could do feats (or some of them could) that rivalled professors at Franconi's. We all have seen the gentleman with the symmetrical legs and fleshings, and with the silver fillet about his head, who keeps his footing on a large globe as it rolls down an inclined

plane. It is sometimes happily called a "star feat," and the professor himself "a daring equilibrist." But Diarmid was before him by at least fifteen hundred centuries, and went up a hill and down again, on a large tun of wine, to the amazement of a sort of open-air circus. A conceited young man, who thought he could do the same feat, and was invited into the ring to do it, was crushed under the barrel.

They seem to have been sumptuously appointed, and to have lived magnificently—feasting, drinking, and fighting. "Tell me," said Conan, an Irish gentleman, at whose house Fion was on a visit, "what are the sweetest strains you ever enjoyed?" Fion answered him in a song that breathes the spirit of poetry:

"When the seven battalions of Fenians assemble on our plain, and raise their standards over their heads; when the howling whistling blast of the dry cold wind rushes through them and over, *that is very sweet to me.* When the drinking hall is set out in Almin, and the cup-bearers hand the bright cups of chaste workmanship to the chiefs of the Fenians, the ring of the cups on the tables, when drained to the last drop, *that is very sweet to me.* Sweet to me is the scream of the seagull and of the heron, the roar of the waves on Tralee, the song of the three sons of Meardha, the whistle of Macluagh, and the voice of the cuckoo in the first months of summer." A couple of centuries later, we find the Fenians in possession of a code of laws more minute than, and quite as philosophical as, those of Justinian, illustrated by commentaries, glossary, and interpretations, divided into elaborate systems of the law of distraint, and debtor and creditor, of "fosterage," &c.*

Of a very, very different pattern are the modern gentry who take to themselves the name of those Ossianic heroes. I wander through the city where the Fenian "centres" are supposed to exist in great force. I see the walls covered with great placards, headed ominously:

A PROCLAMATION!

WOODHOUSE.

Whereas, &c. (to an unlimited extent of what lawyers call "recitals").

And whereas (more "reciting").

Now we, the Lord-Lieutenant-General and General Governor of Ireland, do hereby, &c.

Given at our Council Chamber, Dublin Castle.

Round these awful documents little crowds are gathered, who read and pass on: some with that curious and significant gesture of lifting the "caubeen" a little to one side from the back, to allow of a kind of puzzled scratch of the head, and leaving the caubeen in that position. Some go their way with a muttered "Be-dad!" Down Parliament-street, not a hundred yards from "The Castle," there is a gaudy office, ostentatiously painted a bright green, but its shutters are up, and a policeman, like a gendarme, standing at the door. This is the "IRISH PEOPLE" office, sacked and rummaged only the other night. There is a great deal of newspaper reading, and "sensation" advertisements, and a little dramatic incident or two. Here is a specimen. For as I enter a large house of business, employing some five or six hundred clerks and workmen of all grades, two very gigantic gentlemen, with heavy walking-sticks, bearded and moustachioed, and looking so uncomfortable in their costume—intended to represent easy affluence in the shopkeeping class—that they seem to be theatrical, and to be coming on in a pantomime. I here request a private interview with the head of the house, and I have no difficulty in identifying them as members of the B division, who are the detectives of the force, and who, for some mysterious sort of detection, *must* be over six feet high. As I go out, I see another gentleman in a new frieze coat, and a heavy oak walking-stick, dressed evidently as his ideal of an opulent country shopkeeper, walking carelessly up and down, looking at the clouds and chimney-pots with an abstracted air; and on the opposite side of the street are two police flâneurs in their *real* dress, crossing each other, and with an overdone air of lounging, and a blasé manner, as though the force was getting a bore. Putting "this and that together," it is evident that there is a Fenian inside, who is about to be "drawn."

My friend, Mr. Malachy, whose exertion in the reformation of the drama has been described not very far back,* has, I see, seized on the popular thought, and, with an aptitude which is his characteristic, has embodied it in a grand national drama. One would have thought that Harry Munro, whom he happily described as "that Renowned Son of Momus," and as "the King of Comedians," would alone have been a sufficient attraction. But Malachy is never contented by the meagre and exact measure of duty. He goes beyond it, and has announced a real national drama on the grand stirring subject of "ROBERT EMMETT," with such characters as the ill-fated LORD EDWARD FITZGERALD, the CHIEF JUSTICE, and a savage SERJEANT, and various other important characters of that exciting period. It is remarkable, however, that this drama should have been suddenly withdrawn, owing, no doubt, to that reign of terror which now obtains in the unhappy city. But Mr. Malachy, with that readiness of resource which, I must again remark, those that share in his private friendship have noticed as a special feature in his character, has compassed the same end by substituting the story of the unhappy "WALLACE, THE HERO OF SCOTLAND," whose sentiments and misfortunes a quick-witted audience would know how to apply.

* See the curious portion of the Brehon Laws, just published by the government, and ably and carefully edited by Doctor Hancock. One of the remedies of a creditor against his debtor was "fasting" at his gate until he paid.

* See No. 337.

Although England and Ireland are called the "United Kingdom" as regards laws, yet the statutes of the two countries run very often in opposite streams. In the Irish statute-books are some acts, kept, as it were, hung up in the dark armouries of the Castle like old muskets —a little rusty, perhaps, but still serviceable. In virtue of some of these, policemen can with perfect legality make a "domiciliary visit" at night, burst in upon a newspaper office, seize editor, writers, printers, type, presses, and paper, and "cart" them all away: the men to prison, the presses and matériel to the dungeons or cellars of the mysterious Castle.

Having secured a copy of the "seized" journal, which has acquired a kind of spurious value, like everything supposed not to be procured for "love or money," I turn it over to see if there are any marks and tokens of special sedition about it. But it is, on the whole, harmless enough, though amusing. First, for the advertisements.

A Mr. Archdeacon is at present in a cell, overtaken by justice, and it is a commentary on the proverbial uncertainty of human affairs to read his hopeful announcement of starting in business only a few days before his misfortune overtook him. He had experience, he said, both in this country and the United States, of which he was a citizen. "Archdeacon has *already* in stock," he goes on, "the National Works published by James Corrigan, consisting of Mitchell's Jail Journal Recollections of John Mitchell; Spirit of the Nation; Memoirs of Tone; Women of Ireland; Anecdotes of O'Connell and Shamus O'Brien; together with a few copies of the Priest Hunter."

There seems to have been some ungenerous behaviour as to "O'Donnell-aboo," which is a song considered important enough to infringe the laws of copyright in its behalf. For our Irish People does not disdain to invoke the Saxon's vile laws when they can be found useful. It remonstrates: "The song known as O'Donnell-aboo has *never yet been published free from error.*" Was there ever so unlucky a song? "But it is now in course of preparation under the author's superintendence, and will be ready immediately, with a *portrait of the author, and his autograph authorisation.* It will be brought out in the best style, with the music and correct words, and a *beautiful* title-page. Caution.—The version of O'Donnell-aboo published by Messrs. Murray is incorrect, and has been published not only without my permission, but in defiance of my remonstrances. All authorised and correct copies are signed by the author, Mr. J. McCann, author of O'Donnell-aboo."

I find another advertisement, the programme of "a grand national miscellaneous concert, for a distressed mechanic"—in which the splendid brass band of St. James was to perform "The War Galop," "The Brian Boroihme March," and the irrepressible "O'Donnell-aboo March;" besides the following attractions; a prologue, "written expressly for this occasion," by Mr. J. D. O'Loghlen; an "opening chorus," by the Marvland minstrels; the great barytone, Mr. M. Walsh; a comic song, called "The Late Elections;" and Mr. John Hamon, the "favourite tenor," in some "choice selections from Moore." In the second part, Mr. James de Raymond Coyne was to sing, "in character," The Pilgrims; Mr. J. D. O'Loghlen "was to give" a recitation composed by himself, entitled "The American Child to *his Irish* Father;" and Mr. Nicholson was to recite "Robert Emmett's last speech." "An efficient spring (sic) band" was to be in attendance.

In the "body" of the paper, there is a fair sprinkling of general news of interest; but the journal seems to have adopted a rather novel idea in the shape of its opinions—for these were conveyed through a large correspondence from all parts of the country, supposed to be addressed to the journal, but really manufactured in the office. Every one is pouring in his or her suggestions, complaints, and advice, and this gives the idea of vast circulation and great public interest. But what seems to cut the editor to the quick, and naturally so, are dismal accounts from genuine correspondents and agents of the sale of the paper being interfered with by the commands and influence of the Catholic clergy. Howbeit, he protests—and, like Desdemona, almost too much —that this has the effect of doubling his circulation, and that he devoutly hopes the clergy will redouble their efforts. Herein, it is easily seen that he is not speaking from his heart.

There is a long article on Infantry and Cavalry, showing how the Scots beat the English at Bannockburn with lances, "which, as our readers are aware, is only a modification of the pike." The same was the effect at Trichinopoli, where the British were terribly cut up. There was the same result when the French engaged the Mamelukes—those matchless horsemen not being able to break the squares. The moral inculcated by Ollam Fodthla, the writer of this military essay, is, that pikes would still be useful. But he has, unhappily and unfairly, left out all reference to the Enfield-rifle element. The inadequate pay of the police is then dwelt upon; but "still there are brave Irishmen in the police who would die for their country, and meet its foes, as we trust they shall, upon the glorious battle-fields of freedom." At a social meeting in Quarryville, Ulster, New York, Mr. Clark, "a centre," arrived to organise a "circle," when the "ladies, both young and old—God bless them!—did nobly encore the greeting of the men of Quarryville, so that those on the side walk, taking up the applause, in unison with those on the inside, *made the welkin ring at Mr. Hugh Bradley's Hotel.*" Again, with straightforwardness and candour, the Irish People copies a whole article, which very vigorously refutes all its doctrines, and which winds up with the remark: "We look at the Fenians in the same way that a naturalist examines a colony of fleas; very interesting, no doubt; but, then, we need not go too near them." The editor dismisses it with this comment: "We

have only to reply to this logical and gentlemanly production, that, if we frequently use polysyllables, we mostly know the meaning of them."

Leaving the seat of this ill-fated journal, I go a little further, down a lane beside the Exchange, where there is a narrow court, in which is the police-office. Here, the two black vans are waiting; and here, a great crowd is gathered, and a very curious crowd: not so much the usual unclean miscellany who wait every day, after the "night charges" are disposed of, to "see off" their friends who are in trouble, but a far more respectable class, with visible suspense and anxiety written on their faces—a kind of bewilderment that is very characteristic. It is easy to see that these are some of the "brotherhood," who are stunned by the suddenness of the blow that has fallen, and who are in a little doubt where the next blow may fall, and are drawn by a sort of fascination to this spot. A sight more deserving of compassion is a gathering of women—sisters, wives, and mothers—with faithful wistful faces, with most agonising expressions—women, whose foolish "Pat" or "Andy" is inside, and who has been wakened from his childish dream of "uniforms, independence, circles," and what not, to the cold reality of a dirty cell and prison diet. As a string of these "state prisoners" is led out, it is almost amusing to see in some the faint attempt at carrying themselves with a political martyr air; but the one who is pointed out as the editor of the sacked newspaper, and the promoter of all the mischief, seems to have a very hang-dog air indeed. The poor faithful women press forward with extraordinary energy and passion, with wailings and lamentations, and clasping of hands and prayers, as the black door closes upon each.

Walking through retired streets, before the descent upon the degenerate Fenians of these days, I had met large crowds gathered about ballad-singers of the usual type, but whose minstrelsy was of an unusual sort. The burden of one was something to this effect:

Thin Eyer-ishmin once more sthrike home,
And fight with heart and hand;
March to the battle's front agin,
And sthrike for fatherland.
CHORUS—Thin Eyer-ishmin, &c.

Some songs of a more stirring kind enjoyed a yet greater popularity, and "drew" a larger audience:

THE GREEN FLAG FLYING OVER US.

Prepare, prepare with silint care,
And trust to words no longer,
We had enough of such false stuff,
And find we are not the stronger.
Those mountebanks who fill the ranks,
By lying all in thorns,
Of thim beware, and still prepare,
With the Green Flag flying ower us.

In days of yore, whin talkers bore
A sword, like min of valour,
From every fight they led the flight,
With base and coward trallor.
Such wreckless min, by voice and pin,
With ——— cursed and tore us;
We'll strick thim dumb with fife and drum,
With the Green Flag flying ower us.

But the picture of the enrolled host marching to their task was better still:

THE FENIAN MEN.

See they come over the red blossomed heather,
Their green banners waving in the pure mountain air;
Heads erect, eyes to front, stepping proudly together,
Sure freedom sits throned in each proud spirit there.
Their columns twining,
Their blades still shining,
Like sparkles of beauty, they flash from each man.

There is a grim spirit of ironical prophesy in these verses, and they must come back very disagreeably on the patriots now incarcerated in small cells at the local Bridewell especially the ringing line,

Sure freedom sits throned in each proud spirit there!

As usual, the old fondness for the theatricals of rebellion led to detection. Every one must have his "uniform," his arms, his rank, and his commission. There was too much of "drilling" and "head centres." In the year 'forty-eight, when a similar plot was discovered, the chief of the police, an old soldier, received information of the enrolment of numbers of the "assistants" in a large drapery house, and proceeded to the establishment to arrest them. They were called in, one by one. In the mean time their trunks had been searched, and a large number of officers' commissions in the new "rebel army" discovered. The old officer, a man of dry humour, received each with profound courtesy, addressing them by their proper titles. "Very sorry, Colonel Maloney, but must send you away." "Regret so much, General, to put you to this inconvenience, but——" Then to his policeman: "You may remove the General." The poor drapers were more overwhelmed by this ironical reception, and the absurdity of the situation, than by even the discomfiture of their stupid little plot. It is needless to say that this fooling—which, however, was dangerous enough—was passed over, and that the drapers were sent back to their cloth-yards.

It is constantly asked what is the aim, or what has been the aim, of this "movement"—the latest and most unlucky of all the many movements that have disturbed Ireland. There are two nations to which Irish eyes and Irish hearts turn with feelings of strong and affectionate interest. For the peasant, the idea of "the French" seems to embody all that is romantic and splendid; and during the present century the dream of French ships, and even the words "Bantry Bay" and French uniforms, had all the charm of a spell or a poem. No one who has not lived among the peasantry can conceive with what a reverence and sympathy the name of Napoleon has been followed by them; and it is not too much to say that, if the present bearer of that name visited the country for pleasure and curiosity, the enthusiasm with

which he would be met would be something incredible.

The writer of this knows for a fact that, at the time of the escape from Elba, there were districts in the far west where it was celebrated with bonfires and most tumultuous joy—where the hogshead, and, more welcome still, the keg of poteen, was set running—and this, too, in the houses and on the estates of squires holding the king's commissions of the peace. The peasantry are highly poetical as a class, and have quite the taste of the French for military show. Consequently "a uniform" must figure in the proposition for every "rising;" and the gentleman in Mr. Boucicault's play, who is always figuring along the coast, blazing in a French uniform and stars imperfectly concealed in the ample folds of a cloak, is only a type of this fancy of his countrymen.

Again, with every peasant, America is the grand ideal of strength and power and wealth—the Promised Land, the grand republic to which every one will hurry who can. Though there is no romance about it, it is the ideal of invincibility; it is the country of which England is supposed to stand in awe and terror. It is the land from which the heavy reckoning is to come—some day; it is the land from which many friends and countrymen return with great Mexican-looking trunks, studded over with brass bosses, and with coarse golden rings on their middle finger. There is no such objectionable character as this returned Irish-American. The native goes out simple, courteous, intelligent, pious, and with sweetness of manner and address, quite Italian. He comes back familiar, swaggering, "rowdyish," flashing, impudent, and irreligious. In a county close to Dublin, a gentleman of this pattern has been living for a year or so, mystifying neighbours and police. He went out a miserable pauper, and returned with Mexican trunks, and gold rings, and a tuft to his chin. Nothing could be "made" of him. When the news of the arrests came, he had disappeared. But his work was done. It is known that nearly the whole of a militia regiment had become enrolled in the "body."

It is this indistinct idea of American power, and American chastisement for England, that gives the character to the present movement. All through the last war, Irish sympathy went with the Northerns, with the great United States republic, against the South. The preposterous idea of Irish-Americans coming in great American ships, and backed by the great American government, is the background to the whole. The thing has been foolishly underrated, but few Englishmen have a conception of the amount to which the "organisation" has extended. Returned American soldiers, demoralised marauders, have been scattered over Ireland, inflaming the public mind. The figures of these loose "loafers," bearded, dressed in a kind of free-and-easy piratical fashion, with wide-awakes, long skirts, and half coats, have been familiar to many Dublin inhabitants; and magistrates and "squireens," who have mixed much with the people, have long suspected, and even known, that some secret agitation was at work. Even the old traditions of 'ninety-eight have been diligently evoked, and the story of New Ross, where the raw rebels, with only pikes in their hands, beat the king's troops again and again, has made the round of the country. The poor country peasant or Dublin journeyman tailor has not thought of the chances of pikes against Armstrong guns, or of the stand of the magnificent Brotherhood against twenty-six thousand soldiers, and twelve thousand Lincoln green policemen, who have Enfield rifles and sword-bayonets, and each man of whom is worth three soldiers, as being a trained, intellectual being, and not a machine.*

At the same time, it is not to be supposed that the mass of the people is disaffected. This has been more a coquetting with the vanities of rebellion, than a rebellion. One fact must be always expected, and seems next to impossible to be eradicated: that is, a steady dislike to the English. Some part of it (in the writer's opinion) must be set to the account of the English themselves—at least, of such English as come into the country and carry with them the tone of the true British supremacy. It is to be heard from the British contractor and his workman, who swear at the hodman as "you damned Hirishman," up to the official from Dublin Castle, who coolly tells his host, whose mutton he is cutting, that this or that is "*so* Irish." There is the fatal barrier of RELIGION; there is the miserable confusion of the land question; there is in the government a narrow red-tapeism which would in a dull way fit a chilling official coldness and constraint to impulsive manners and temperament.

THE GRANITE CITY.

I DO not know a more delightful sensation than that which we feel on revisiting after many years the scenes of our boyhood. When I leapt on shore from the deck of the City of London, and set my foot upon my native heath—or more literally granite—I leapt back through twenty years into the past, carrying the present along with me. On these very stones I had stood when a boy, wistfully gazing after this very ship as she slowly steamed away, southward bound, for London! I have watched her until she disappeared round the headland, and still lingered there gazing at the trail of smoke which she left behind. I remember how I sighed as I turned away—sighed to think that I was not going with her; how impatient I was with everything

* The Irish policeman must read, write, cast accounts, and pass an examination in various branches. He is trained to act by himself, or with a fellow, is sent into a wild district on "a mission," and is thus taught to rely on himself and his own resources. He can chase a criminal a whole day over hill and valley, and is generally the best jumper and wrestler in the parish. Such a combination ought to make a wonderful soldier.

about me; how weary of my college life; how I longed to see the grand world that lay beyond the hills! Many a time I looked up into the heavens and marked the position of the Northern Bear, and, setting my back to it, I knew that my face was towards the great city which I longed to see. I envied the moon up there looking down upon it!

But now when my ambition has been fulfilled, when my longing has been satisfied, when I have seen all the kingdoms of the world and the great cities thereof, I come back to the scenes of my early days with something of the chastened feeling of the Prodigal Son. Not that I have wasted my substance in riotous living, or drunk too deeply of the cup of the world's pleasures; not that I have proved to myself that all is vanity; but because I am weary of the noisy traffic of the great Highway and long for rest in quiet spots, where I can muse in peace amid the simple memories of the past.

Here amid the noise and bustle of this busy quay I am as much alone as if I were wandering in some secluded country lane. The old familiar houses speak to me with silent voices; the stones that knew my footstep in days of old whisper pleasant greetings in my ear. The human faces I see are all strange to me, the voices unfamiliar. The only faces that I know and that seem to know me are the faces of the clocks. They are not changed. Perhaps, being in Time's employ, their master favours them and exempts them from the tax which he levies upon everything else—on the principle of letting the "hands" in a business have goods at cost price. In the days of my youth I have looked up at yonder clock and said, "Haste thee, haste thee; why so slow?" I look up at it now and say, "Gently, gently; why so fast?" When I have been conjugating "tupto" how I have longed for it to strike! I would have it linger now and not be so ready with those warning bells. Do you know the sensation of being in a state of complete sensuous happiness; of being agreeably intoxicated with pleasant thoughts and feelings! And did you never wish to be struck so—to be turned into a pillar of sweetness as Lot's wife was turned into a pillar of salt? I know the sensation well; it is one which leaves no higher happiness beyond. It is a feeling that may come upon you in a cellar, or in a garret, and while it lasts you will not wish for heaven itself. Such a feeling did I have, while walking along in a dream, among the old familiar streets of Aberdeen.

Our loftiest thoughts are sometimes associated with very common things. The sublime and the ridiculous do not always walk a step apart; they often go arm in arm. I come to a certain shop, and a philosophical turn is given to my thoughts by the sight of a meerschaum pipe in the window. It is fashioned in the form of a shell. Such a pipe as that did I envy when I was a boy, strictly forbidden by my parents ever to smoke. It was in this very shop window that I saw it. I looked at it with longing eyes day after day for many weeks. I saved up my money to buy it; but I never saved enough. The coveted pipe never became mine. But now I would not give a fig for all the pipes in the shop. Yet, I don't know that I ever aspired to anything so eagerly as the possession of that shell-shaped meerschaum pipe which lay in this window twenty years ago. I have no desire in connexion with the pipe-shop at all now, except that the proprietor would let me sit down upon his door-step and have a good think.

What a long way it used to seem from the steam-boat wharf to Marischal-street. It seems very short now. I turn the corner before I know where I am, and straight before me I see inscribed on the front of a blue granite house, the words "Theatre Royal." There I saw my first play. It was Pizarro. I went to the pit, and for three hours dwelt in a land of the wildest delight. Such handsome noble men; such beautiful majestic women! And the fire from heaven! How solemn and imposing that was! I did not see the wire, and the bit of tow steeped in spirits of wine; which I have subsequently become familiar with, and consequently learned to regard with contempt. Nor was I personally acquainted with the majestic Pizarro and the noble Rolla. Alas that I ever should come to know them personally, and find out that they were only five feet eight, and liked rum, and when in London were reduced to the sad extent of playing general utility. There was a farce after the tragedy which gave me great delight. I don't remember the name of it; but I remember two officers in blue frock-coats and red trousers who sat at a table and drank, and a comic groom who sang a funny song about a fair, and a pretty actress—oh, such a pretty actress, who—well, I only remember that I fell over head and ears in love with her and haunted her steps, and wrote letters to her, when I ought to have been writing my Greek exercises, and learning a moral from the little story of the pretty Grecian girls who laughed at Anacreon and called him a silly old man. Ah, how pretty she was; how clever! I am glad I never saw her afterwards, for I still retain the impression that she was the cleverest and prettiest actress that ever was. I carefully preserve a similar impression with regard to Pizarro—and believe that it is the finest tragedy that ever was represented, albeit I know that it is "down right booth at a fair." But nothing will induce me to be convinced of this by going to see another performance of the piece. I will adhere to my early faith.

I go across the road and look at the bill. I notice the names of actors whom I know. No doubt they are at this moment rehearsing the tragedy of King Richard III., which is to be performed this evening by special desire. Shall I call upon them? What! And see that the Peruvian altar is composed of an old egg-box, that heaven's lightning-conductor is a bit of bell

wire, and that the lightning itself is paraffin! Never. Let me keep at least one disenchanted corner in my memory of the theatre.

I bend my steps towards the street where I lived when I was a student. There is a railway station at the end of it now. The railway had not come so far north in my day, and when we travelled it was by the mail-coach, with a guard in a red coat blowing a horn behind. The railway, I see, has respectfully stopped at the end of my street, but whether out of regard for me, or in consequence of the elevated nature of the situation, I will not stay to inquire. Even with this alteration in the aspect of the place I could find my way to number eleven blindfold. This must be the house—yes, this *is* the house, notwithstanding that it has been converted into a shop for the sale of whisky to be drunk on the premises. Had it been otherwise, I might have had some delicacy about asking permission to view my old abode. As it is, I walk in and order half a gill, which is brought to me in the very apartment where I was formerly accustomed to drink—I will not say deeply—of the waters of the Pierian spring. There was my grate: I knew its pattern: there was my brass gas-pipe: I knew its twist. There was the recess in which stood my box bed. It was a "press" now for whisky-bottles and gill-stoups! What am I to make of this? The student's lodging-house turned into a shebeen. Bacchus sitting in the chair of Minerva. Is this a symptom of the decline and fall of Aberdeen? Well; no, I think not. The simple fact is, that a public-house was wanted here to accommodate the officials employed at the railway. But how easy it would be for me to say that it was the direct consequence of the decline of learning and morals. A university had been swept away, and there were no students to take lodgings. So grossness stepped in and turned the homes of the students into dram-shops. It would look very feasible. And is it not in such fashion that history is sometimes written? I have been walking through unfrequented by-streets in order to have my own company. You cannot muse when any one is by your side talking to you. A single word uttered by a known voice breaks the spell of your reverie, and presto! your pleasant waking dream has fled. Thus on turning the corner of my street, I am saluted with—"Ha, how d'ye do; welcome back to Scotland," and I awake at once to hard realities. And the realities here are very hard indeed.

If the world last long enough, Aberdeen will assuredly come to be known as the Eternal City; and, physically at least, it will have as good a claim as Rome to that title. If they escape fire, there is no reason why the houses in Union-street should not last for a thousand years. They are built entirely of granite, and the walls are three times as thick as those of the best brick houses which are now being built in London. And while they will last for many centuries, their outer walls will remain as white and clean as when they were first erected. The smoke which settles upon them one day, is washed off by the rain the next. The boasted endurance of marble is nothing to that of granite. Marble crumbles and cracks after a century or two, and its whiteness is dimmed in a few short years. Granite lasts for ever, and every storm of wind and rain renews its pristine brightness. Houses which Dr. Johnson saw and admired are as stable and as white and clean as they were a hundred years ago. "They build almost wholly with granite," said the doctor; "which is well known not to want hardness." No, indeed, hardness is exactly what it does not want; and why the learned doctor, who was a Dictionary-maker, and prided himself upon his English, could not have said in a straightforward manner that "it was very hard," I cannot imagine. "It is beautiful," he adds, and "must be very lasting." Dr. Johnson was three days in Aberdeen, and did not care to inquire what was the staple of its trade; albeit he received the freedom of the city, with liberty to set up shop within its precincts. All that he says about the town is, that it has two universities and an English church, and that the women of the lower class are visibly employed in knitting stockings. Yet Aberdeen was no insignificant place even in Dr. Johnson's time.

Sir, let us take a walk down Union-street, and see what it is like to-day. This Union-street is one of the streets of the world. For the solidity, regularity, and beauty of its buildings, it has no equal, even in Paris. The roadway and pavements, formed of the same grey granite of which the houses are built, are singularly clean, and the whole street for the length of a mile looks as if it had been cut and fashioned out of a long ridge of solid rock. From one end of the street to the other there is not a brick nor a single patch of stucco to be seen. All is solid granite, put together so nicely that even the mortar is invisible. The shops are splendid, most of them having large plate-glass windows in which all kinds of rich goods are displayed with much taste. The fruiterers' shops are particularly attractive, and the show of fruit in some of them is not inferior to that of the middle row in Covent Garden, London. The public buildings constructed of granite, and in the purest Grecian style of architecture, have a most noble appearance. There is financial stability in their very look. No one could have any apprehension of such banks as those breaking. The market opposite the post-office is an immense building. The lower part is devoted to fish; the upper part to fruit and vegetables; the side-passages to butchers' meat, poultry, game, &c., and the galleries to fancy wares of all kinds. In fact, the Aberdeen market combines Covent Garden, Billingsgate, Newgate, and Leadenhall markets, and the Lowther Arcade, all in one. It is a most commodious and well-contrived structure, and the Duke of Bedford might do well to run down and take a look at it before he decides upon the plan for a

new market in Covent Garden. Aberdeen abounds with educational and charitable institutions. It had until lately two universities—King's and Marischal Colleges—which, I regret to say, are now united. Its grammar-school—where Lord Byron began his early studies—is one of the most ancient and famous seminaries in Scotland: the nursery of many cultivated intellects, whose influence has helped to sway the destinies of the world. Among the philanthropic institutions may be mentioned the Royal Infirmary, one of the most splendid granite buildings in the kingdom; Gordon's Hospital, an institution similar to George Heriot's in Edinburgh, for the maintenance of poor and fatherless children; and the Orphan Asylum, built and endowed, at an expense of thirty thousand pounds, by Mrs. Elmslie, a native of Aberdeen. In every respect, Aberdeen is as handsome, as well-to-do, and as clean a town, as is to be met with between Land's End and John o'Groat's. A stranger entering it for the first time will be reminded of Paris—I mean the new Paris of Napoleon the Third. It is like Paris in the whiteness and regularity of its buildings, and also in the picturesque character of the costumes of the market-women and fish-wives. There, however, the likeness ends. There are few "sights" or shows in Aberdeen. In that respect it is a very severe town indeed. There are only three monuments: one of the late Duke of Gordon, another of Prince Albert, recently erected, and a market cross. That of the Prince Consort is a monument of high-backed chair and jack-boots. From one point of view you cannot see the Prince for chair, from another you cannot see him for robes, and from a third you cannot see him for boots. The Prince is better represented in a sixpenny chimney ornament. There is a great lack of amusement in Aberdeen. There is a theatre, and there is a music-hall; but neither of these temples is of a sufficiently high class to attract the better classes of the people. The result is, that when the better classes want a sensation, they go to preachings and revival meetings; or if they are not disposed that way, they spend the evening over the toddy tumbler. I am more than ever convinced that the drinking habits of my countrymen, and their fanatical character, are chiefly due to the want of rational amusements. Here in Aberdeen, which has a population of nearly eighty thousand inhabitants, there is no public amusement of any kind (except an occasional concert) which the respectable classes can venture to patronise. Ladies and gentlemen cannot go to a theatre where the boys smoke pipes in the gallery. The theatre has been pushed away out of sight in a cold steep street near the shore, as if the town were ashamed of it. It is not "the thing" to go to the theatre in Aberdeen; and the better classes being deprived of the sensation play, must be content with the sensation sermon. Preachings are held every day in the week, and the sermon actually takes the place of the play. It is offered as a sort of evening's entertainment.

As a centre of trade, Aberdeen is a town of great importance; but if you ask me what is the chief article of manufacture in this "northern city cold," as the local poets call it, I answer you, not wool, nor flax, nor iron, nor paper, nor ships—though all these things are manufactured in high perfection—but men. The raw material is produced all round about in the lowlands of the south and east, and in the highlands of the north and west; but here, in the grammar-school and in the university, it is made up for the markets of the world.

HALF A MILLION OF MONEY.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "BARBARA'S HISTORY."

CHAPTER LXIII. MR. FORSYTH.

Mr. Trefalden was, undeniably, a very gentlemanly man. His manners were courteous; his exterior was prepossessing; and there was an air of self-possessed quiet about all that he said and did which made his society very agreeable. He talked well about what he had read and seen; and if even his knowledge of things lying beyond the radius of his own profession was somewhat superficial, he knew, at all events, how to turn it to the best account. At the same time there was nothing of the brilliant raconteur about him. He never talked in epigrams, nor indulged in flashes of sarcasm, nor condescended to make puns, like many men whose abilities were inferior to his own; but there was, nevertheless, a vein of subdued pleasantry running through his conversation, which, although it was not wit, resembled wit very closely.

Most people liked him; and it was a noticeable fact that, amid the wide circle of his business acquaintances, the best-bred people were those whose disposition towards him was the most friendly. Lord Castletowers thought very highly of him. Viscount Esher, whose legal affairs he had transacted for the last ten years, was accustomed to speak of him in terms which were particularly flattering upon the lips of that stately gentleman of the old school. The Duke of Doncaster, the Earl of Ipswich, and other noblemen of equal standing, looked upon him as quite a model attorney. Even Lady Castletowers approved of William Trefalden to a degree that was almost cordial, and made a point of receiving him very graciously whenever he went down into Surrey.

By mere men of business—such men, for instance, as Laurence Greatorex—he was less favourably regarded. They could not appreciate his manner. So far, indeed, from appreciating it, his manner was precisely the one thing they most of all disliked and mistrusted. They could never read his thoughts nor guess at his cards, nor gain the smallest insight into his opinions and character. They acknowledged that he was clever; but qualified the admission by adding that he was "too clever by half." In short, William Trefalden's popularity lay, for the most part, to the west of Temple-bar.

Gifted, then, with a manner which was in itself a passport to good society, it was not surprising that the lawyer made a favourable impression upon the ladies in Brudenell-terrace. It suited him to call himself by some name not his own, and he chose that of Forsyth; so they knew him as Mr. Forsyth, and that was all. Resolved, however, to win their confidence, he spared no pains, and hesitated before no means whereby to attain his object. He traded unscrupulously on their love for the husband and father whom they had lost; and, skilfully following up his first lead, he made more way in their regard by professing to have known Edgar Rivière in the days of his youth, than by lavishing Saxon's hundreds on the worthless pictures which had served to open to him the doors of their home.

And this admirable idea had been wholly unpremeditated. It came to him like a flash of inspiration; and as an inspiration he welcomed it, acted upon it, developed it with the tact of a master. Careful not to overact the part, he spoke of the painter as of one whom he would have desired to know more intimately had he continued to reside in England, whose character interested him, and whose early gifts had awakened his admiration. He evinced an eager but respectful desire to glean every detail of his after-career. He bought up the whole dreary stock of Nymphs and Dryads with assiduous liberality, carrying away one or more on the occasion of every visit. Nothing was too large, too small, or too sketchy for him.

An acquaintance conducted in this fashion was not difficult of cultivation. The munificent and courteous patron soon glided into the sympathetic adviser and friend. Frequent calls, prolonged conversations, unobtrusive attentions, produced their inevitable effect; and before many weeks had gone by, the widow and orphan believed in William Trefalden as if he were an oracle. Their gratitude was as unbounded as their faith. Strange to English life, ignorant of the world, poor and in trouble, they stood terribly in need of a friend; and, having found one, accepted his opinions and followed his advice implicitly. Thus it came to pass that the lawyer established himself upon precisely that footing which was most favourable to his designs, and became not only the confidant of all their plans, but the skilful arbiter of all their actions. Thus, also, it came to pass that at the very time when Saxon Trefalden believed them to be already dwelling upon the shores of the Mediterranean, Mrs. and Miss Rivière were still in England, and temporarily settled in very pleasant apartments in the neighbourhood of Sydenham.

Hither their devoted friend came frequently to call upon them; and it so happened that he paid them a visit on the evening of the very day that Saxon set sail for Sicily.

He went down to Sydenham in an extremely pleasant frame of mind. Ignorant of their sudden change of plans, he still believed that his cousin and the Earl were on their way to Norway; and it was a belief from which he derived considerable satisfaction. It fell in charmingly with his present arrangements; and those arrangements were now so carefully matured, and so thoroughly en train, that it seemed impossible they should fail of success in any particular. Perhaps had he known how the little Albula was even then gliding before the wind in the direction of the Channel Islands, instead of tacking painfully about in the straits of Dover, Mr. Trefalden would scarcely have arrived at Mrs. Rivière's apartments in so complacent a mood.

It was delightful to be welcomed as he was welcomed. It was delightful to see the book and the embroidery laid aside as he came in—to meet such looks of confidence and gladness—to be listened to when he spoke, as if all his words were wisdom—to sit by the open window, breathing the perfume of the flowers, listening to Helen's gentle voice, and dreaming delicious dreams of days to come. For William Trefalden was more than ever in love—more than ever resolved to compass the future that he had set before him.

"We thought we should see you this evening, Mr. Forsyth," said Mrs. Rivière, when the first greetings had been exchanged. "We were saying so but a few moments before you came to the gate."

"A Londoner is glad to escape from the smoke of the town on such a delicious evening," replied Mr. Trefalden, "even though it be at the risk of intruding too often upon his suburban friends."

"Can the only friend we have in England come too often?"

"Much as I may wish it to be so, I fear the case is not quite an impossible one."

"Mamma has been out to-day in a Bath-chair, Mr. Forsyth," said Helen. "Do you not think she is looking better?"

"I am quite sure of it," replied the lawyer.

"I feel better," said the invalid. "I feel that I gain strength daily."

"That is well."

"And Doctor Fisher says that I am improving."

"I attach more value, my dear madam, to your own testimony on that point, than to the opinion of any physician, however skilful," observed Mr. Trefalden.

"I have great faith in Doctor Fisher," said Mrs. Rivière.

"And I have great faith in this pure Sydenham air. I cannot tell you how rejoiced I am that you consented to remove from Camberwell."

Mrs. Rivière sighed.

"Do you not think I might soon go back to Italy?" she asked.

"It is the very subject which I have chiefly come down this evening to discuss," replied the lawyer.

The lady's pale face lighted up at this reply.

"I am so anxious to go," she said, eagerly; "I feel as if there were life for me in Italy."

"The question is, my dear madam, whether you are strong enough to encounter the fatigue of so long a journey."

"I am sure that mamma is not nearly strong enough," said Miss Rivière, quickly.

"I might travel slowly."

"To travel slowly is not enough," said Mr. Trefalden. "You should travel without anxiety—I mean, you should be accompanied by some person who could make all the rough places smooth and all the crooked paths straight for you throughout the journey."

"I should be unwilling to incur the expense of employing a courier, if I could possibly avoid it," said Mrs. Rivière.

"No doubt: for a courier is not only a costly, but a very anomalous and disagreeable incumbrance. He is both your servant and your master. Might it not, however, be possible for you to join a party travelling towards the same point?"

"You forget that we know no one in this country."

"Nay, those things are frequently arranged, even with strangers."

"Besides, who would care to be burdened with two helpless women? No stranger would accept the responsibility."

Mr. Trefalden paused a moment before replying.

"Given an equally suitable climate," he said, "I presume you are not absolutely wedded to Italy as a place of residence?"

"I love it better than any other country in the world."

"Yet I think I have heard you say that you are not acquainted with the southern coast?"

"True; we always lived in Florence."

"Then neither Mentone nor Nice would possess any charm of association for you?"

"Only the association of language and climate."

"And of these two conditions, that of climate can alone be pronounced essential; but I should say that you might make a more favourable choice than either. Has it never occurred to you that the air of Egypt or Madeira might be worth a trial, if only for one winter?"

"Mamma has been advised to try both," said Miss Rivière.

"But I prefer Italy," said the invalid. "The happiest years of my life were spent under an Italian sky."

"Pardon me; but should you, my dear madam, allow yourself to be influenced by preference in such a case as this?" asked Mr. Trefalden, very deferentially.

"I can offer a better reason, then—poverty. It is possible to live in Italy for very, very little, when one knows the people and the country so well as we know them; but I could not afford to live in Madeira or Egypt."

"The journey to Madeira is easy, and not very expensive," said Mr. Trefalden.

Mrs. Rivière shook her head.

"I should not dare to undertake it," she replied.

"Not with a careful escort?"

"Nay, if even that were my only difficulty, where should I find one?"

"In myself."

The mother and daughter looked up with surprise.

"In you, Mr. Forsyth?" they exclaimed, simultaneously

Mr. Trefalden smiled.

"You need not let that astonish you," he said; "it is my intention to spend all my future winters abroad, and I am greatly tempted by much that I have heard and read lately about Madeira. I am a free man, however, and if Mrs. Rivière preferred to venture upon Egypt, I would quite willingly exchange Funchal for the Nile."

"This is too much goodness."

"And, if you will not think that I take an unwarrantable liberty in saying so, I may add that the question of expense must not be allowed to enter into your calculations."

"But——"

"One moment, my dear madam," interrupted the lawyer. "Pray do not suppose that I am presuming to offer you pecuniary assistance. Nothing of the kind. I am simply offering to advance you whatever sums you may require upon the remainder of Mr. Rivière's paintings and sketches; or, if you prefer it, I will at once purchase them from you."

"In order that I may have the means of going to Madeira?" said Mrs. Rivière, colouring painfully. "No, my kind friend; I begin to understand you now. It cannot be."

"I fear you are beginning only to misunderstand me," replied Mr. Trefalden, with grave earnestness. "If you were even right—if I were only endeavouring to assist the widow of one whose memory and genius I deeply revere, I do not think you ought to feel wounded by the motive; but I give you my word of honour that such is not my prevailing reason."

"Do you mean that you really wish to possess"

"Every picture from which you are willing to part."

"But you would then have from twenty-five to thirty paintings from the same brush—many of them quite large subjects?"

"So much the better."

"Yet, it seems inconceivable that"

"That I should desire to make a Rivière collection? Such, nevertheless, is my ambition."

"Then you must have a spacious gallery?"

Mr. Trefalden shook his head.

"I have no gallery," he said, "at present. Some day, perhaps, if I ever fulfil a long-cherished dream, I may settle abroad, and build a house and gallery in some beautiful spot; but that is only a project, and the destinies of projects are uncertain."

He glanced at Miss Rivière as he said this, and seemed to suppress a sigh. She was looking away at the moment; but her mother saw the glance, and Mr. Trefalden intended that she should see it.

"In the mean while," he added, after a pause, "I am not sure that I shall be so selfish as to hoard these pictures. The world has never yet recognised Edgar Rivière; and it would be only an act of justice on my part if I were to do something which should at once secure to his works their proper position in the history of English art."

"What can you do? What do you mean?" faltered Mrs. Rivière.

"I scarcely know yet. I thought at one time that it would be well to exhibit them in some good room; but that plan might have its disadvantages. The most direct course would be, I suppose, to present them to the nation."

The mother and daughter looked at each other in speechless emotion. Their eyes were full of tears, and their hearts of gratitude and wonder.

"But, in any case," continued Mr. Trefalden, "the pictures need cleaning and framing. Nothing could be done with them before next year, and they must be mine before even that amount of progress can be made."

"They are yours from this moment, most generous friend and benefactor," sobbed the widow. "Oh, that he could have lived to see this day!"

But Mr. Trefalden would not suffer the ladies to express their thanks. He was proud to be regarded by them as a friend, and still more proud to be the humble instrument by means of which a great name might be rescued from undeserved obscurity; but he protested against being styled their benefactor. He then adverted, with much delicacy, to the question of price, stated that he should at once pay in a certain sum at a certain bank to Mrs. Rivière's credit; touched again upon the subject of Madeira; and, having of course carried his point, rose, by-and-by, to take his leave.

"Then, my dear madam, I am to have the honour of escorting you to Funchal in the course of some three or four weeks from the present time?" he said at parting.

"If Mr. Forsyth will consent to be so burdened."

"I think myself very happy in being permitted to accompany you," replied Mr. Trefalden; "and if I have named too early a date"

"Nay, a day hence would scarcely be too soon for me," said Mrs. Rivière. "My heart aches for the sunny south."

To which the lawyer replied by a courteous assurance that his own arrangements should be hastened as much as possible, and took his departure.

"Mr. Forsyth has quite what our aunt, old Lady Glastonbury, used to call the 'grand air,'" said Mrs. Rivière, as Mr. Trefalden took off his hat to them at the gate. "And he is handsome."

"I do not think him handsome," replied her daughter; "but he is the most liberal of men."

"Munificently liberal. He must be very rich, too; and I am sure he is very good. Let me see, there was a Forsyth, I think, who married a daughter of Lord Ingleborough in the same year that Alethea became Lady Castletowers. I should like to ask whether he belongs to that family."

"Nay, darling, why put the question? Our Mr. Forsyth may come of some humbler stock, and then"

"You are right, Helen; and he can afford to dispense with mere nobility. Do you know, my child, I have sometimes thought of late——"

"What have you thought, my own dear mother?"

"That he—that Mr. Forsyth is inclined to admire my little Helen very much."

The young girl drew back suddenly, and the smile vanished from her lips.

"Oh, mamma," she said, "I hope not."

"Why so, my child? Mr. Forsyth is rich, kind, good, and a gentleman. His wife would be a very happy woman."

"But I do not love him."

"Of course you do not love him. We do not even know whether he loves you; but the time may come"

"Heaven forbid it!" said Miss Rivière, in a low voice.

"And I say, Heaven grant it," rejoined her mother, earnestly. "I would die to-morrow, thankfully, if I but knew that my child would not be left alone in the wide world when I was gone."

The girl flung her arms passionately round her mother's neck, and burst into tears.

"Hush, hush!" she cried, "not a word of death, my darling. You must live for me. Oh, how glad—how glad I am that you are going to Madeira!"

The invalid shook her head, and leaned back wearily.

"Ah," she sighed again, "I had rather have gone to Italy."

CHAPTER LXIV. THE BARRICADE IN THE VIA LOMBARDI.

Disagreeably conscious of being roused, as it were, against his will from something heavier than sleep, of a painful struggle for breath, and of a sudden deluge of cold water, Saxon opened his eyes, and found Lord Castletowers leaning over him.

"Where am I?" he asked, staring round in a bewildered way. "What is the matter with me?"

"Nothing, I hope, my dear fellow," replied his friend. "Five minutes ago, I pulled you out from under a man and a horse, and made certain you were dead; but since then, having fetched a little water and brought you round, and being, moreover, unable to find any holes in your armour, I am inclined to hope that no damage has been done. Do you think you can get up?"

Saxon took the Earl's hand, and rose without much difficulty. His head ached, and he felt dizzy; but that was all.

"I suppose I have been stunned," he said,

looking round at the empty battery. "Is the battle won and over?"

The guns were gone, and the ground was ploughed with their heavy wheel-tracks. Dark pools of blood and heaps of slain showed where the struggle had been fiercest; and close against Saxon's feet lay the bodies of a cuirassier and two Neapolitan gunners. At the sight of these last he shuddered and turned away, for he knew that they had all three been shot by his own hand.

"Why, no; the battle is not over," replied the Earl; "neither can I say that it is won; but it is more than half won. We have taken the guns, and the Neapolitans have retreated into the town; and now a halt has been sounded, and the men are taking a couple of hours' rest. The bridge over the Nocito, and all the open country up to the very gates of Melazzo, are ours."

"There has been sharp fighting here," said Saxon.

"The sharpest we have seen to-day," replied the Earl. "Their cavalry re-took the guns, and drove Dunn's men out of the battery; but our fellows divided on each side of the road, received them between two fires, and when they tried to charge back again, barred the road and shot the leaders down. It was splendidly done; but Garibaldi was in imminent danger for a few moments, and, I believe, shot one trooper with his own hand. After that, the Neapolitans broke through and escaped, leaving the guns and battery in our hands."

"And you saw it all?"

"All. I was among those who barred the road, and was close behind Garibaldi the whole time. And now, as you seem to be tolerably steady on your legs again, I propose that we go down to some more sheltered place, and get something to eat. This Sicilian noonday sun is fierce enough to melt the brains in one's skull; and fighting makes men hungry."

Some large wood-stores and barns had been broken open for the accommodation of the troops, and thither the friends repaired for rest and refreshment. Lying in the shelter of a shed beside the Nocito, they ate their luncheon of bread and fruit, smoked their cigarettes, and listened to the pleasant sound of the torrent hurrying to the sea. All around and about, in the shade of every bush, and the shelter of every shed, lay the tired soldiers—a motley, dusty, war-stained throng, some eating, some sleeping, some smoking, some bathing their hot feet in the running stream, some, with genuine Italian thoughtlessness, playing at morra as they lay side by side on the green sward, gesticulating as eagerly, and laughing as gaily, as though the reign of battle and bloodshed had passed away from the earth. Now and then, a wounded man was carried past on a temporary litter; now and then, a Neapolitan prisoner was brought in; now and then, a harmless gun was fired from the fortress. Thus the hot noon went by, and for two brief hours peace prevailed.

"Poor Vaughan!" said the Earl, now hearing of his death for the first time. "He had surely some presentiment upon his mind this morning. What has become of the horse?"

Saxon explained that he had sent it to the rear, with orders that it should be conveyed back to Meri, and carefully attended to.

"I do not forget," he added, "that we are the repositories of his will, and that Gulnare is now a legacy. I think it will be wise to send her to Palermo for the present, to the care of Signor Colonna."

"Undoubtedly. Do you know, Trefalden, I have more than suspected at times that—that he loved Miss Colonna."

"I should not wonder if he did," replied Saxon, gloomily.

"Well, he died a soldier's death, and to-morrow, if I live, I will see that he has a soldier's burial. A braver fellow never entered the service."

And now, the allotted time having expired, the troops were again assembled, and the columns formed for action. Garibaldi went on board the Tuckori, a Neapolitan steam-frigate that had gone over to him with men, arms, and ammunition complete, at an early stage of the war, and was now lying off Melazzo in the bay to the west of the promontory. Hence, with no other object than to divert the attention of the garrison, he directed a rapid fire on the fortress, while his army advanced in three divisions to the assault of the town.

Medici took the westward beach; Cosenz the road to the Messina gate; and Malenchini the Porta di Palermo. This time, Saxon and Castletowers marched with the Cacciatori under General Cosenz.

By two o'clock, they found themselves under the walls of Melazzo. The garrison had by this time become aware of the advancing columns. First one shell, then another, then half a dozen together, came soaring like meteors over the heads of the besiegers, who only rushed up the more eagerly to the assault, and battered the more desperately against the gate. A shot or two from an old twelve-pounder brought it down presently with a crash; the Garibaldians poured through; and, in the course of a few seconds, almost without knowing how they came there, Saxon and Castletowers found themselves inside the walls, face to face with a battalion of Neapolitan infantry.

Both bodies fired. The Neapolitans, having delivered their volley, retreated up the street. The Garibaldians followed. Presently the Neapolitans turned, fired again, and again retreated. They repeated this manœuvre several times, the Garibaldians always firing and following, till they came to the market-place, in the centre of the town. Here they found Colonel Dunn's regiment in occupation of one side of the quadrangle, and a considerable body of Neapolitan troops on the other. The air was full of smoke, and the ground scattered over with groups of killed and wounded. As the smoke cleared, they could see the Neapolitans on the one hand,

steadily loading and aiming—on the other, Dunn's men running tumultuously to and fro, keeping up a rapid but irregular fire.

No sooner, however, had the new comers emerged upon the scene, than a mounted officer came galloping towards them through the thick of the fire.

"Send round a detachment to the Via Lombardi," he said, hurriedly. "They have thrown up a barricade there, which *must* be taken!"

The mention of a barricade was enough for Saxon and Castletowers. Leaving the combatants in the market-place to fight the fight out for themselves, they started with the detachment, and made their way round by a labyrinth of deserted by-streets at the back of the piazza.

A shot was presently fired down upon them from a neighbouring roof—they advanced at a run—turned the angle of the next street—were greeted with three simultaneous volleys from right, left, and centre, and found themselves in the teeth of the barricade. It was a mere pile of carts, paving-stones, and miscellaneous rubbish, about eight feet in height; but, being manned with trained riflemen, and protected by the houses on each side, every window of which bristled with gun-barrels, it proved more formidable than it looked.

The detachment, which consisted mainly of Palermitan recruits, fell back in disorder, returning only a confused and feeble fire, and leaving some four or five of their number on the ground.

"Avanti!" cried the officer in command.

But not a man stirred.

At that instant the Neapolitans poured in another destructive volley, whereupon the front ranks fairly turned, and tried to escape to the rear.

"Poltroni!" shouted their captain, striking right and left with the flat of his sword, and running along the lines like a madman.

At the same moment Castletowers knocked down one defaulter with the butt-end of his rifle, while Saxon seized another by the collar, dragged him back to the front, drew his revolver from his belt with one hand, and with the other carried the man bodily up against the barricade.

It was a simple act of strength and daring, but it turned the tide as nothing else could have done. Impulsive as savages, and transported in a moment from one extreme of feeling to another, the Sicilians burst into a storm of vivas, and flung themselves at the barricade like tigers.

The Neapolitans might pour in their deadly fire now from house-top and window, might intrench themselves behind a hedge of bayonets, might thrust the dead back upon the living, and defend every inch of their position as desperately as they pleased, but nothing could daunt the courage of their assailants. The men who were running away but a moment before, were now rushing recklessly upon death. Shot down by scores, they yet pressed on, clambering over the bodies of their fallen comrades, shouting "Viva Garibaldi!" under the muzzles of the Neapolitan rifles, and seizing the very bayonets that were pointed against them.

The struggle was short and bloody. It had lasted scarcely three minutes when the Palermitans poured over in one irresistible wave, and the Neapolitans fled precipitately into the piazza beyond.

The victors at once planted a tricolor on the summit of the barricade, manned it with some thirty of their own best riflemen, and proceeded to dislodge such of the enemy as yet retained possession of the houses on either side.

In the mean while, the Garibaldian officer ran up to Saxon with open arms, and thanked him enthusiastically.

"Gallant Inglese!" he said, "but for you, our flag would not be flying here at this moment."

To whom Saxon, pale as death and pointing down to the pile of fallen men at the foot of the barricade, replied:

"Signor capitano, I miss my friend. For God's sake grant me the assistance of a couple of your soldiers to search for his body!"

It was a ghastly task.

The Neapolitans had escaped as soon as they found their position untenable; but the loss of the attacking party was very great. Most of the men immediately under the barricade had been cruelly bayoneted. The dead wore a terrible expression of agony on their colourless faces; but many yet breathed, and those who were conscious pleaded piteously to be put out of their sufferings. One by one, the dead were flung aside, and the wounded carried down to the shade of the houses. One by one, Saxon Trefalden looked into each man's face, helping tenderly to carry the wounded, and reverently to dispose the limbs of the dead, and watching every moment for the finding of his friend.

At length the last poor corpse was lifted—the search completed—the frightful bead-roll told over. Thirty-two were dead, five dying, eleven wounded; but amongst all these, the Earl of Castletowers had no place. Saxon could scarcely believe it. Again and again he went the round of dead and dying; and at last, with bloodstained hands and clothes, and anxious heart, sat down at the foot of the barricade, and asked himself what he should do next.

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AT THE BAR.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "A CRUISE UPON WHEELS," &c. &c.

CHAPTER XIV. MISCHIEF BREWING.

"CONGRATULATE me, Gilbert," said Mr. Lethwaite, as he sat himself down one evening in the room where our young friends the Penmores were at work, the husband turning out a copy of verses for a certain periodical, and the wife engaged in knitting the heel of a stocking, which is as critical a proceeding as any other that can be mentioned. She had intimated by a shake of the head to Mr. Lethwaite when he came in that he must not speak to her or expect her to shake hands. Then she went on counting with all her might.

"Ah, I see it's as bad as playing on the drums," said Lethwaite; and the wife, being thus absorbed, he went and sat himself down by the husband, and began to talk to him, as we have seen. But Gilbert lifted his hand in deprecation. His eye was in a fine frenzy rolling; he was in agonies over a difficult line.

"Hang it," muttered Mr. Lethwaite to himself, "I have chosen the wrong moment."

Penmore entreated him once more by a gesture to forbear, and, presently finishing the last line with a flourish of the pen, and then repeating the words of his friend, which he had heard but vaguely, asked,

"'Congratulate you' on what? On having everything that this world can give?"

"On having nothing," replied the other, quite imperturbably.

Mrs. Penmore looked up from her work, concluded that he was joking, naturally enough, and went on knitting.

"Yes," replied Gilbert; "we all know that that's the case."

"I assure you that it is the case," continued Lethwaite in the same tone. "My partner has bolted with everything he could lay his hands on, leaving us nothing but our embarrassments."

"What do you mean?" asked Penmore.

The astonishment of the husband and wife, as Lethwaite unfolded his tale, was altogether unbounded, as indeed was their sympathy. People must have seen something of poverty themselves to be able to feel for the pecuniary troubles of others. Lethwaite himself seemed to be the least moved of the party.

"One of the advantages of having no feeling," he said, "is, that I really don't seem to care about this business."

"Not care about it?" repeated husband and wife in a breath.

"Upon my honour I don't at present," replied this remarkable personage. "I don't know what I may do hereafter."

"Well, but what do you mean to do?" asked Penmore.

"Do? Oh, I shall drum."

"Drum!"

"Yes; my musical friends tell me that there's a very respectable income to be made out of dexterous drumming."

"Dear me!" ejaculated Gilbert, somewhat bewildered.

"Oh yes," continued Lethwaite, "consider what a power of destruction lies in the hands of the drummer; how easily he may destroy everything. It is worth any money to secure a man who, with tight parchment before him, and drumsticks in his hands, is capable of self-control, and can keep himself within bounds."

"I can conceive that," said little Mrs. Penmore.

"But do you mean to say," asked her husband, "that you actually contemplate turning your drumming powers to account?"

"I do most distinctly. Oh, I assure you I'm under no uneasiness whatever. Then there's the watch-making."

"You're rather slow at that, arn't you?" said Gilbert.

"Well, I am a little. Then there are one's relations. Mine are an infernal set; but then they're proud."

"Is that a quality which is likely to help you just now?" asked Penmore.

"Most undoubtedly. They'll hear of my losses; then they'll say, 'Suppose he should destroy himself, what a disgrace to the family!' and then they'll come down. Here's one of the advantages, you see, of an insight into motive; I can tell at once what they'll say and what they'll do. But I'd rather do without them."

"You take a cheerful view of things, I must say, Lethwaite."

"One of the advantages of having no feeling. By-the-by, there's one thing I don't take a very cheerful view of. I'm very uneasy about the look-out of my poor old clerk; I can't think what will become of him."

"What, old Goodrich?" said Penmore. "I

don't think you need trouble yourself about him. I've heard some mercantile friends of mine speak of him as quite a well-known character in the City, and one who might have bettered himself years ago, if he had chosen."

"You don't mean to say that?" asked the cynical man, brightening up considerably. "He never even hinted that to me. Why, he must have been staying on against his own interest, in order to look after my affairs. But no, that's impossible——"

"The dear, good old man," said Gabrielle.

"No, no; it's impossible, I tell you," cried the sceptic. "What can his motive have been?"

"Why, attachment to your service, of course," answered Mrs. Penmore.

"Impossible," replied the other. "The world is not constituted like that."

"Some part of the world is not, I dare say," replied the lady, "but I am quite sure that good old man is."

"I wish to Heaven I could think so," said Lethwaite; "but I daren't. The finding out that one has been duped, after giving any one credit for a long course of disinterested conduct, is so very dreadful."

"I had rather be duped over and over again," said Gilbert, "than never be able to allow myself the luxury of belief."

"Gilbert," said his wife, reproachfully, "I thought you had given him up. You know that he hates us and all his fellow-creatures, and himself too, and glories in it."

Lethwaite laughed. "Not so bad as that," he said, "and it's no new doctrine. Some ancient writer has said that he challenges the world to produce, from the time of the creation down to that moment when he spoke, one single action the exciting cause of which should be altogether pure. Now, what do you think of that statement? I think it is one of the Fathers who says it."

"The Fathers may say what they like," said Gilbert. "My firm conviction is, that it won't do to pry into motives and exciting causes. To peer into the defects of what is, on the whole, a fine character, is much such an act of madness as if I should take you and clap you in the sunlight, and then examine your countenance with a microscope. What specks and blotches and defects of every sort and kind I should discover——"

"Come, I say," interposed the subject of this imaginary examination.

"Oh yes, but I should find such flaws," continued Penmore, "in the finest skin that ever covered a human anatomy; while as to going below the skin, do consider what ugly things we should come to then; yet this is what you want to do. You want to take the skin off one's mind and dissect that; and I tell you, again and again, that it won't do."

There is no telling how much longer Gilbert might have gone on trying to drive his friend out of his intrenchments, had not the domestic attached to the service of Miss Carrington—Jane Cantanker by name—made known her presence in the room by a protesting and injured cough. She had knocked, and entered unobserved.

"If you please, Mrs. Pingmore," she said, taking advantage of a pause in Gilbert's flowing eloquence, "my mistress would be glad if you would take the trouble to step up-stairs for half a moment, as she have something which she wishes to say very particular."

And with that, and a prolonged stare at Mr. Lethwaite, whom she looked upon as a worthless and dissolute character, and hated accordingly, the beautiful maiden left the apartment.

It is impossible to describe the chilling effect of this interruption upon our little party. They were under a cloud directly, and silence descended upon them from that moment. To have continued their discussion would have been impossible.

"I suppose I must go," said the devoted Mrs. Penmore at last, and speaking in a whisper.

"Poor thing," said her husband, "it all falls upon you."

"Shall I go?" asked Lethwaite, laughing. "Look here, Mrs. Penmore; give it to her."

Gabrielle smiled. "It's she who gives it to me," she said. All this time, she was lingering near the door, putting off the mauvais quart d'heure. Suddenly, there came a sharp ring at the bell up-stairs. Mrs. Penmore heard it, and vanished.

The two men sat there together and waited.

"You talk about my affairs and my difficulties," said Lethwaite, after a while, "but what are they to yours? I have only myself to think of. You are differently situated."

"The two ends are alarmingly far apart," answered Penmore, trying to make a joke of it, "and the bringing them together is a gymnastic exercise requiring considerable strength and activity. By-the-by, I have not thanked you for giving me that chance with the attorneys. What a failure it was."

"The vulgar brutes," replied our partisan. "How I hated them. I should have liked to kick them down stairs."

"Assaults are expensive luxuries, and you can't afford them now."

"But tell me, Penmore," said our cynic, "you are not discouraged?"

"No, not yet," replied the other. "But why don't *you* go in for it, old man, now you have your way to make? *You* have no foreign accent?"

"Oh, out of my way altogether. The drum's the thing for my intellectual calibre, and that taxes it to the uttermost, I can tell you."

Then these two lapsed once more into silence. They had been talking in a light tone, and treating things, that were serious enough, as jokes; and yet, if their inmost feelings at that moment could have been subjected to inspection, it is much to be questioned whether any great amount of light-heartedness would have been discoverable. They had each been making an effort, and now for a little while each gave it up, and gave way to a curious sad feeling—a sort of blight, which seemed to have entered the room with

Miss Cantanker, and to have remained behind when that lady took her departure. Such influences do descend upon us at times, and it is to little purpose that we fight against their force. Sometimes they mean something, sometimes they mean nothing; but they are sufficiently distressing while they last. When that interruption came which has been already mentioned, our little party of three were enjoying themselves quietly enough. They had partaken together of that meal whose praises have been sung already in more eloquent terms than any to which I can give utterance, and as they sat round the tea-table, it seemed as if they had respectively reached one of those periods in life's journey when there is a pause, when we draw the boat out of the current and moor it to the bank, and get out and rest; then the messenger came, and they must begin living again; they must get back to their places on the thwarts, and row for dear life.

I have dwelt a little on the quietness of that evening, and have, if I may venture to say so, almost enjoyed it myself, partly, perhaps, because I know that for many a day to come my characters would enjoy no more such calm moments, or such peaceful, friendly intercourse.

There is trouble at hand, and I have sad and harrowing things to tell of, and from the narration of which I feel inclined to shrink. So I linger over the memory of that pleasant evening, and hesitate to go on to other and more painful scenes.

But men, and women too, require other than pleasant scenes and happy experiences if they are to attain to the glories of heroism. The noblest steel has no easy time of it as it progresses towards perfection. It is beaten with bitter blows. It is thrust into the furnace to be heated, and then into the ice-brook to be chilled; and some metal there is that cannot bear the test, and some that comes out of it—impregnable.

There are different grades in life, and each involves a different preparation for its right development. There is the common iron with which we scrape the mud from off our feet, and there is the quivering steel which makes a Toledo blade; so there is the high-bred race-horse, and the nag on which the farmer's wife can jog to market; and in all these cases, and many more that might be cited, it will still be found that, in proportion to the magnificence of the result, will be the fierce severity of the preparation.

"She has been more cruel, and more strange than ever," said poor Gabrielle, coming back after an interval into the room where she had left her husband and his friend.

"Why, you have been crying, Gabrielle?" said Penmore.

"Yes; I could not help it. I have been so angry with myself, for I quite lost my temper for a time, and that horrid woman, the servant, was there and seemed so pleased——What do you think she sent for me about?" asked Gabrielle, interrupting herself.

She paused for an answer, but neither Gilbert nor Lethwaite seemed disposed to hazard a guess, so she went on:

"She sent for me because she felt very poorly, she said, and very sleepy, and I must say she looked both. But there was no chance of her going to sleep, she added, while we made so much noise down stairs in the room underneath."

"Well," exclaimed Penmore and his friend, simultaneously.

"Yes," Mrs. Penmore went on. "She said that she had never heard such a noise in her life. And then she asked who we had got here, and was it not that 'horrid' Mr. Lethwaite."

"She's sincere, at any rate," remarked the gentleman thus flatteringly alluded to.

"And then," continued Gabrielle, "she wanted to know if you were going, or whether you meant to stop here all night?"

Lethwaite got up immediately and made for his hat.

"No, no, no," cried Gilbert, forcing him back into his chair. "Nothing of the sort."

"Well, it was when she said that," Gabrielle went on, "that I lost my temper a little. I told her that it was bad taste and wrong to talk like that; that people were more sensitive about their friends than about themselves, and a great deal more, and I went out of the room, still quite angry; and that horrid Cantanker said, 'Upon my word!' as I went away, and then I could not help crying, because I was so vexed with myself."

"I think you were perfectly right to be a little indignant," said Lethwaite, "and I should have thought less highly of you if you had not fired up a little in defence of a friend."

"And she said worse than all that," said Gabrielle to her husband when their friend was gone. "She actually said that she believed I was in love with Mr. Lethwaite, and that that was why I defended him. Gilbert, my darling, do you wonder that I was angry?"

"This cannot go on," replied her husband, as if talking to himself.

CHAPTER XV. A CRISIS.

Penmore was right. It was not possible that such a state of things should go on. But how was it to be put a stop to? that was the difficulty. Were they to intimate to his cousin, without beating about the bush, that the present state of things was unsatisfactory, and that it would be better that it should come to an end? They could hardly do that. What were they to do?

Gilbert perplexed himself with such questions all through the night. Questions to which no answer came kept him awake and troubled him. Alas, he little knew what an answer to them all might have been given if he could but have read the short future contained in the next twenty-four hours. What we call Fate moves at such an unequal pace. For weeks and months and years things go on with a wonderful monotony, and the condition of our affairs undergoes no change whatever. And then a day comes, and in the space of a few hours all is altered. Some one event takes place which involves change in all the rest. One stone slips in the fabric that has stood so long, and lo! in

an instant the whole building tumbles to pieces. The change takes place so suddenly, too. The Gordian knot is cut, not untied, and the whole condition of our affairs is so utterly different in the evening to what it was in the morning, that we can hardly, as we lie down at night, recognise ourselves as the same beings who got up in the morning with such widely different prospects. At last Gilbert fell asleep towards morning, and dreamed that he had to make a speech in court; that he did not know one single point of the case; that he could not get his gown on; and that his wig had turned into a coal-scuttle, for it is with refreshing imaginings of this sort that we are sometimes reinvigorated after passing a bad night.

Then when he went to sleep his wife awoke and lay there a prey to dismal thoughts and grim forebodings, such as most of us have at times been acquainted with in the early morning hours; and she thought of their prospects and quailed. A day pregnant with fate had begun when that morning dawned, though she knew it not. There was no sign of a day in which more than usual might be expected to happen.

It was a dull morning when Gilbert got up to his day's labour, and he felt jaded and unfit for anything in consequence of his bad night. Still, what he had to do must be done, and the day's labours, profitable or unprofitable, must be gone through. And so he went away without having come to any conclusion as to the course of conduct to be pursued with regard to his cousin, but only resolved that something must be done.

"We will talk about it this evening, Gabrielle," he said, as he left the house. He went and sat in court, briefless, and, for a time, well-nigh hopeless. How he envied those judges on the bench, so calm and so prosperous. How simple their lives seemed, how assured were their prospects. There were no signs of care, or anxiety upon their faces. They were there to do their duty, and they did it scrupulously, but their responsibility seemed to sit more lightly upon them than might be expected. Public cares, however pressing, do not eat a man's heart away as personal anxieties do.

Our friend Mr. Craft had a case that came on in court that day, and Gilbert could not help watching it with curiosity, and thinking how much he wished that it had been entrusted to him. He saw his way to such a distinct view of it, too, it was quite tantalising. In the course of the defence an opportunity occurred of making a very important point, but the counsel engaged by Mr. Craft failed altogether to take advantage of it, nor did the attorney himself seem to be struck by it. Our briefless friend could not resist. He wrote down his thought hastily on a slip of paper, which he conveyed secretly into Mr. Craft's hand, and presently he saw that gentleman get up and whisper eagerly in his advocate's ear. There was a brief whispered conference between these two, and then the barrister, seeing at once the importance of the suggestion, which came, as he supposed, from the attorney, seized hold of it, and indeed used it to such purpose, that from that moment he had it all his own way, and ultimately got his verdict with ease. Mr. Craft made his way to where Gilbert was standing when the court was breaking up.

"Very good 'int that, Mr. Penmore, very good indeed, and much obliged, I'm sure. Showed a good knowledge of law, and what's almost more, a good knowledge of what'd *do*. Ah, sir! if you was to take to chamber practice, depend upon it you'd make a 'it yet. You've got the head for a lawyer, though you haven't got the tongue." And the attorney laughed at his own conceit, and bustled back to talk over the case with his recent client.

It was not much this, but it gave a sort of encouragement to our friend—a little encouragement goes a great way with those who are not used to it. Gilbert thought that he had caught a glimpse of something hopeful in the future, for he was of a sanguine nature, and as he walked home he went over the case which had just been tried once more, and thought if he had had the chance of defending, how he would have done it. The issue of the case so evidently turned on that suggestion of his, the prospects of the defence were so instantly affected by it, that he even allowed himself to hope that the judge on the bench might have observed what had occurred, and might make such inquiries as would lead to the discovery of who it was that had given Mr. Craft what that gentleman called "a 'int." Poor Gilbert! The judge had noted the point at the time, and seeing how it was pressed, had given Mr. Craft's well-known acuteness the credit of the suggestion, as had everybody else in the court. "Sharp fellow that Craft," the gentlemen of the robe had whispered to each other. "I'd rather have him for me than against me, any day."

So Gilbert Penmore went home to dinner in a hopeful mood, and with a good appetite.

He went up the steps quite gaily, and put his key into the door, and opened and shut it with such unaccustomed briskness, that his little wife, who was always on the look-out about this time, noticed instinctively to what a gallant measure her husband was marching, and went out into the passage to meet him.

"Has anything particular happened?" she asked. I believe they were both always expecting that something particular would happen.

"No, dear; nothing very particular," replied her husband, carelessly, but with the pardonable vanity of an ill-understood man. "I had the luck to make rather a good suggestion to-day, that was all." And he told her how it had all happened. And Gabrielle thought she saw him Lord Chancellor, and that the berth was inadequate to his deserts.

And so they infected each other with their good spirits, and were ready to sit down to dinner in a sanguine mood. Some will have it that these—rather than the seasons of gloomy foreboding—are the moments in our lives which are to be looked upon with apprehension and alarm. Undoubtedly, it does happen not un-

frequently that our misfortunes are heralded in by sensations of unaccustomed happiness. If the reverse of this holds true, we may venture to be the less disturbed by sad presentiments.

When Miss Carrington made her appearance at the dinner-table that day she seemed to come provided with the means of casting a shadow over everything. The very tablecloth seemed to take a lower tone, and there was not a bit of sparkle left in the electro-plate. She had a dreadful way of establishing herself at table as if for some serious business, and was always at this time fostered with especial care by her attendant, who had an aggravating way of ducking under the table with a footstool, and coming to the surface again with a determination of blood to the head and an expression of martyrdom very trying to witness. This done, Miss Cantanker would place by her mistress a decanter of a peculiarly hideous character, containing some wine which had been specially ordered for her by Captain Scraper, and in which she had the most implicit confidence.

"I don't think I shall want any to-day, Jane," said Miss Carrington, rather faintly.

"Begging your pardon, miss, you do want it, and this day most particular. For you are low, and must be kep' up."

It certainly did seem to be the case that Miss Carrington was in want of some assistance from without in the way of a stimulant. She looked both depressed and ill, and appeared to be not in the sweetest of tempers. As the meal advanced, and under the influence of certain doses of Captain Scraper's cordial, she seemed to rally, however, a little, and was able to make herself generally agreeable by keeping up a running conversation with her domestic.

"You heard from my former servant, your married niece, to-day, Jane, didn't you?"

"Yes, miss," replied Miss Cantanker. "I did."

"Good news, Jane, I hope?"

"No, miss. The news was not good; and coming from that quarter it very seldom is. The baby is taken bad with croup, and the youngest but one have got the measles at the same time. Her husband, miss, is out of work, and has taken to drinking, because he says his home's so miserable."

"Oh, that *is* bad," said Gabrielle, ever ready to conciliate. She was not to be allowed, however, to sympathise in this case, as Miss Cantanker took care to insinuate, by continuing to talk to her mistress, and taking no notice of Mrs. Penmore's remark.

"The rent is all behind, miss," continued the fair creature; "and the bailiffs is to be put in possession immediate."

"Well, Jane," remarked her mistress, with a soupçon of annoyance in her tone, "when I asked for news of your married niece, I expected something very different from this."

"Ah, and so did I, miss, and many's the bitter tear I've shed over that very letter, as goodness knows."

There could be no doubt that this was an exhilarating kind of thing. It was an exhilarating thing for Miss Carrington, who had her domestic with her all day long, to take this opportunity of discoursing with her, and, in addition to this, the subject of conversation which had been chanced upon was one eminently qualified to raise the spirits of persons not overburdened with pecuniary resources.

Penmore tried hard to turn the conversation into some more satisfactory channel; but not to much purpose. We all know what turning a conversation is. Stemming a mountain torrent is child's play to it.

The conversation turned itself presently, but the new channel was rather a muddy one, it must be owned.

There came up a dish that was not so fortunate as to find favour in the eyes of Miss Carrington. This is a faithful history—an attempt to present things as they really are—and it must be frankly acknowledged that the dish was a failure. It was of the nature of a hash, or vamp-up, and he who should have said that it was both watery and tasteless, would only have spoken the words of truth, bitter though such words might have been.

"Jane," said Miss Carrington, laying down her knife and fork, "what did my last medical attendant say was the kind of nourishment best suited to my constitution?"

Miss Cantanker's answer was oracular.

"'Your mistress,' he said, taking me aside as he left the house, 'is of a delicate constitution, and requires nootriment—nootriment, Mrs. Cantanker,' he says, 'in everything, if you please. The best of roast and the best of biled; but always fresh meat, and never anythink in the way of 'ashes or kickshaws of any sort or kind.' Those, miss, was his very words."

"I'm very sorry," put in poor Gabrielle. "But the fact is, there was so much of the leg of mutton left yesterday, that I didn't know what was to be done with it. I gave the servant the most particular directions, and it ought to have been quite strong and nice."

"Don't attempt to eat it, miss. I can do you something with nootriment in it for supper," whispered Miss Cantanker.

"Oh, this is not all," said Gabrielle, quickly. She had heard the Cantanker utterance, as had indeed been intended. "There is a fowl coming," she added.

There *was* a fowl coming—something like a fowl—with bones that would have been big enough for the substructure of an eagle, with legs that no mortal hand could dissever, with muscles and tendons that must have made the animal the terror of the dunghill, and a mature fowl, too; none of your paltry little unfledged chicks with nothing on them. After wrestling with this veteran for some time, and till his arms actually ached, Gilbert at last laid down the knife and fork one on each side of the animal, and fairly burst into a roar of laughter. He had been annoyed inexpressibly by what had been going on during the meal, had had the greatest difficulty in keeping his temper, and now the pent-up feeling had found a vent—it

didn't matter what—a vent. The worst of it was, too, that Gabrielle caught the infection, and, after resisting as long as she could, went into fits also. Miss Carrington became on the instant a perfect monument of gravity, and this made the other two so much worse, that it seemed as if they would never recover themselves. It soon became painful to both of them, but still there was no stopping it. They left off, and began again. They tried to talk, but to no purpose. They even, as each confessed to the other afterwards, thought over all their troubles and sources of anxiety—of which, Heaven knows, they had enough—but, strange to say, even that was of no use, but seemed, if anything, to make them laugh more than ever.

Now such laughter as this generally, if not always, occurs at the wrong moment, and the very feeling that it is so makes it the more uncontrollable. This was certainly not the right season for such mirth. Miss Carrington was sitting by, as has been said, a monument of gravity, and her colleague was standing behind her chair erect and solemn. Each fresh burst of laughter was evidently regarded by both as a fresh insult, while, so far from being infected by it, their gravity increased every moment.

At length Miss Carrington condescended to ask her attendant what Mr. and Mrs. Penmore were laughing at.

"It is such a preposterous piece of ill luck," stammered Gilbert as well as he could, for the fit was not over. He was now engaged in sawing off a sort of flake of what is called white meat from each side of the breast-bone. One of these, when they were at last amputated, he sent to his cousin, and the other to his wife. Then he went to work heroically at a leg on his own account—a great, stringy, scaly, black leg.

"I cannot possibly cut this," said Miss Carrington, abandoning her flake after a single ineffectual attempt to cut a piece off it.

"Don't attempt it, miss," urged the lovely Cantanker; "you was to partake of nothing, you know, but what was easy of digestion."

"It is very unfortunate," began Gabrielle, still twitching a little with suppressed laughter.

"It is, indeed," replied Miss Carrington; "one gets nothing to eat. There must be some means of knowing whether a fowl is fit to eat or not before it comes to table."

"It is very difficult to tell. I thought this looked quite a fine one; but I don't think I shall be taken in again."

There was a pause here broken by nothing but the sound of Penmore's knife coming into violent collision with his plate, as the weapon glanced off from impregnable positions in the neighbourhood of the drumstick.

"Don't you think that it would be possible for you to get a better cook?" suggested Miss Carrington, after a time.

"I am afraid we could hardly afford it," said Gabrielle, and then she added, "just yet," with an eye to futurity.

There was another pause after this, disturbed by the same music as before. When it had lasted some time, it was once more broken by Miss Carrington.

"I really—had—no—idea," she said, as if it had just occurred to her for the first time, "how poor you were."

"We don't complain," said Gilbert, trying to speak cheerfully, though he felt rather indignant. "We don't expect first-rate cookery or first-rate attendance. We intend to attain to both in due time, don't we, Gabrielle? and in the mean while we wait with such patience as we have at command." Penmore looked across at his wife, and saw that she was fuming under his cousin's allusion to their poverty.

"But it really was such a very courageous thing—in both of you, I mean, of course—to go and set up a household without the means, and against everybody's consent. I really quite admire it. It was romantic, and there is so little romance now-a-days."

"It was courageous on *somebody's* part, though not on mine, that I can see," said Gilbert; and he looked encouragingly across at his wife, who was keeping down her indignation at the turn which the conversation had taken, with difficulty. She smiled at him, but it was through her tears.

This determination on the part of Penmore to stick to his colours, and his entire indifference to her suggestions, enraged Miss Carrington to fury pitch.

"Oh, but I hold that it *was* courageous and romantic too," she said, still with the same sneer, "because *you* might have had all sorts of opportunities, you know——"

She got no further. Gabrielle had controlled herself, and fought against herself thus far with all her might. But this last was too much. This insinuation, before her too, was more than she could bear. We have said that there was West Indian blood in her veins, and that, although she was so gentle and affectionate, that blood could at last be roused. It tingled now in every vein:

"For shame—for shame!" she cried, hastily rising, and flying to her husband's side. "You must be wicked, worse than wicked, to say such words. Such hints come ill from any woman's lips, and worst of all from yours—yours, that would have given such a glad assent, if Gilbert—*my* Gilbert, had but spoken to you the words which he spoke to me."

"Hush, Gabrielle—hush, my pet. It is not worth while——"

"No, Gilbert, my darling, let me speak. You don't know her, and how she's always trying to hint at what I've said. It was for you she came here. I see it all now. You cannot ask me to bear such infamy, or even to check any longer the anger which I feel. Oh, she is too wicked—too wicked to live."

And the girl sank down on her knees beside her husband, bursting into an agony of tears.

Gilbert drew her towards him, and tried to quiet her; but the tempest was wild and sudden as the storms which rage in the seas where the girl was born, and the calm was still far off.

As for Miss Carrington, she had at first absolutely quailed before that most righteous indignation. She turned from white to red, and from red to white again; nor did she trust herself to speak till she could regain that sarcastic tone in which she had spoken at first.

"After such a display of emotion, to call it by a mild term, as this, I think it will be better for me to retire. If I am unworthy to live at all, I am certainly especially unworthy to live in the presence of such injured purity. Meanwhile, I must frankly own that I am sorry for you, Mr. Penmore."

"Oh, let her go—let her go," murmured Gabrielle, still sobbing convulsively on her husband's breast.

"After what has happened——" Gilbert began addressing his cousin.

"Oh, you need not be afraid," she answered. "After what has happened, it is, as you were going to say no doubt, better that all intercourse should cease between us. The intentions with which I originally came here have been misinterpreted, and the foulest aspersions have been cast upon my character. There is an end of everything between us."

It is not to be supposed that a scene of such a painful nature as this which I have attempted to describe could reach its termination without the introduction into it of some element of the more grotesque sort. Miss Cantanker, who had remained silent all this time, and who had indeed worn the appearance of one so utterly paralysed and overwhelmed with astonishment as to have lost all power of speech, now when she saw her mistress about to leave the room, burst out into a tirade of frenzied eloquence, such as is not often heard.

"Yes," she exclaimed, looking around her with flashing eyes, "and if my mistress had listened to me, it's long enough ago that all this would have been brought to an end. To come to a 'ouse like this, where the very beds is of iron like a workus or a prison in place of her nice four-poster with hangings like a Christian's should be, and valance round the bottom—to get nothing to eat but what's unfit to set before a dog, and she ordered in a special way to have her nootriment of the daintiest and the best—to have all this to undergo, and her own devoted servant also annoyed and put upon at every turn with a dog-hole offered her to sleep in and required to take her meals with an ignorant servant-of-all-work that couldn't spell her own name—and besides all this to be insulted and told she wasn't fit to live—why, 'tis enough to make one's very spirit bust with rage and leave the 'ouse at wanst without so much as waiting for a cab."

At this point, Miss Cantanker's address was cut short by her mistress, who, telling her to be silent, and to follow her immediately, made at once for the door. Before she passed through it, she turned round, and addressing Gilbert again, said:

"It will be necessary that I should see you once more, in order to make a final settlement of a business nature. If you please, we will say at nine o'clock to-morrow."

And with that she left the room.

To-morrow!

EXETER SIXTY YEARS AGO.

Manufacturing was, in former times, a term far more appropriately applied to the great labours of our country than it can be now—for these immense productions were once almost wholly the result of hand labour. Machinafactures would be a more becoming name for the outpourings of our immense establishments, now that engines have to such an extent superseded manual toil. In the ancient staple trade of England, from the shearing of the wool to the packing up of the finished cloth, the very simplest appliances were employed, and almost every stage was confided to the personal charge of individual and isolated man. The shearer clipped the sheep's wool, which was delivered over to the washer to be cleaned and dried; the solitary comber sat by his oven and pulled it into smoothness; the spinner in her cottage twisted her distaff, and turned and reeled the threads, of which the weaver took charge to feed his lonely loom. In early days the fulling was merely the treading under feet—the Norman word fouler still betrays its origin—the dyer dipped the fabric into the vat, the calenderer gave it a gloss from heavy pressure, the tucker folded it up, and the packer corded the finished article. Little by little, invention facilitated, simplified, and improved, the various processes; combined intelligence superseded separate labour. Machinery, directed by a few, did the work of many; and all the engineering arts were brought to economise the cost and to perfect the production.

Sixty years ago, the woollen manufacture was in a transition state; there existed a constant rivalry between the north and the west of England; but the north had many advantages in the competition. Engineering genius exerts itself most successfully where it finds an abundance of the raw materials with which it works. Devon was, and is, rich in water power, but it has neither coals nor iron; and the cheapness of these, especially of the former, settles many a question where steam can be made the motive power. Added to this, the woollen trade of Exeter was the child of protections and privileges.

Threescore years ago, in the city of Exeter, almost every other man you met, wore an apron of emerald green serge, girded and tied with a scarlet woollen band—they all belonged to the "Guild of Incorporated Weavers, Fullers, and Shearmen," who were alone permitted to exercise their craft within the precincts of the city, and to their body no man was admitted who had not served an apprenticeship of seven years in order to learn the "art and mystery" of the said craft. Various royal charters confirmed the monopolies, while they led to the

downfal of the manufactories and of the workmen. They were manacled men who were running a race with others whose limbs were free, and the result could not be doubtful. Yet it is curious to see what tender care these ancient kingly grants express for the well-being and the well-doing of "our subjects" engaged in the making of woollen stuffs—how, in consequence of humble representations of benefits to be derived from this and the other interference, the sovereign is graciously pleased to concede to such and such corporations such and such rights and immunities. The Exonian tuckers, like the Spitalfields weavers, hugged their banes as blessings; and a manufacture, which yielded at one time half a million sterling, silently departed from the banks of the Exe.

The merchants and master-fullers were really directing fellow-workmen among their dependents, taking a part in their manual labour. The language in which those dependents were invariably addressed was *soce* (socii). The city is crowded with endowed almshouses, whose pious founders devoted large portions of their gains to provide comforts for their dependents in their old age. Time has introduced many abuses, and made these trusts the instruments of personal patronage, the exercise of which neither the Commissioners of Charities, nor the powers of public opinion, have been able effectually to control. Formerly, the great merchants and manufacturers were the sole distributors of the gifts intended for the labouring people employed in the woollen manufactures. A few of these and their direct descendants are still left, but among the present corporate court there is scarcely a representative now of that great staple trade which was patronised by monarchs, founded the fortunes of the local aristocracy, and gave employment to multitudes of the labouring poor. The forefathers of no less than three of the existing directors of the Bank of England were engaged in the woollen trade of Exeter.

The charities of these prosperous men were not only liberally conferred upon the places where they had amassed their fortunes, but often brought the benefits of education, and provided asylums for the aged and the poor, by the endowments of schools and hospitals in the humbler places of their birth. The founder of Blundell's School, at Tiverton, was a "fuller." In the small town of Kingsbridge, the principal public school is due to the munificence of Thomas Crispin, a "fuller," who also contributed largely to the charitable foundations of the Devonian capital. One may notice, in passing, two curious epitaphs, one in the Kingsbridge churchyard, and another at the neighbouring cemetery at West Alvington. At the portal of the first are these lines:

> Here lie I at the chancel door;
> Here lie I because I am poor.
> The farther in the more you pay,
> But here lie I as warm as they. (1793.)

The second shows that the harmony between the clergyman and his parishioners must have been sorely disturbed. There is a slate stone erected to the memory of one John Jeffreys, who died in 1748, which tells the following story:

> This youth when in his sickness lay, Did for the minister send, That he would come and with him pray, But he would not attend. But when this young man buried was, The minister he did admit, That he should be carried into the church, That he might money geet. By this you see what folks will dwo, To geet money if they can, For he did refuse to come and pray, By the foresaid young man.

It would not be easy to find a more emphatic explosion of indignation. I have heard the inscription denounced as calumnious. It is very likely that the clergyman did not visit the sick young man; it is quite probable that he was paid his burial fees; but the reason for non-attendance silently insinuated in the one case, and the bold proclamation of his motive in the other, "that he might money geet," do not display much Christian charity.

One day of the year (Ascension-day) was occupied in local fights. It was called *prossessioning*, or beating the bounds, day. The boys of the different localities were assembled in the parish church. Every one received a white willow wand and a bun, and, accompanied by the beadle or the sexton, the boys were marched round the parish boundaries, which they were expected to defend against all intruders and invaders. Such invaders there were—the boys of the neighbouring parish. There were some places where the line of demarcation was the middle of a pond, or the centre of a water-course, and there, the frontier not being exactly defined, the territorial combats raged most fiercely. There was a remote parish—that of St. Sidwell's—the claims of whose "boys" to the right of citizenship were doubtful. They were contumaciously called Grecians; but the parish being large, and its warriors numerous, the citizen lads were accustomed to combine against "the outer barbarians," and the battles raged furiously, and black eyes and bloody noses were left to exhibit the results of the fray. Each parish had in turns suffered the ignominy of defeat and reaped the laurels of victory. Each had its heroes and its poltroons—the leaders of the forlorn hopes and the lingerers in the rear.

Most of the green open spaces within and near the city of Exeter were then tenter-grounds, locally known as rack-fields, which were employed for stretching, measuring, and drying the great variety of woollen cloths woven in the scattered cottages of the husbandmen, or in the villages and towns of the neighbourhood, and brought to the western capital to be milled, and burled, and carded, and rowed, and singed, and shorn, and dyed, and racked, and calendered, and pressed, and tucked, and tilloted, and packed, and corded, and marked, and shipped for exportation. The brightest colours stratified the rack-fields—hues of dazzling scarlet, blue, yellow,

green, purple—of every tint; for in those days the sober shades of modern fashions had not driven out the gayer and more pictorial hues of the past. The very names of the various fabrics have for the most part passed away from memory. Among many others were baizes, bayetones and bayetillas, serafines and sempiternas, segathees and duroys, linsey woolseys, templars, and worleys, druggets and castors, estamenes and Franciscans (used for the clothing of the Peninsular monks), and, above all, long ells, which were sent by the East India Company by hundreds of thousands, and are still supplied, mostly by Yorkshire, to that country where fashions change so little.

Of the localities, many of the ancient names are left. Some are found in Doomsday Book, showing their Saxon or Norman origin. There are Larrochbere (now Larkbear), Linhays (woollen walks), Bonhay, Shilhay, Northernhay, Southernhay, Friernhay (the walk of the friars). The castle is called Rougemont (mentioned by Shakespeare). The changing titles of the city itself may be traced through its many stages of Keltic, Roman, Saxon, Norman, and modern history, Caer Isca, Isca Danmoniorum, Exonia, Exceancester, Exon, Exeter.

The tenter-fields are turned into garden-grounds, and covered with villas now. There is scarcely a vestige left of the ancient glories of the woollen trade.

The quay was crowded with vessels of many nations. The principal trade was with Spain, Portugal, France, Italy, Germany, and Holland. The merchants of Exeter, most of them travelled men, were thorough masters of the languages of the countries with which they had to do. Their correspondence was carried on, not in English, but in the various European tongues, and the captains and crews of the vessels from the Continent were quite at home when they were anchored in the Exe. Quarrels with the Courtenay family had interrupted the navigation of the river; but they were enabled to reach the heart of the city by a canal which presented none of the obstructions of bars, sand-banks, or weirs. A serge-market was held every Friday in the open street, where merchants, manufacturers, ship-masters, and others congregated, gave or received their orders, made their payments, and settled the business of the week. The place of recreation was "Moll's Coffee-house"—a curious gable-faced old building, which still stands in the cathedral-yard. There they played at chess, cards, or dominoes, or held confabulations on passing events, or vibrated backwards and forwards in the then unenclosed space, in whose centre rises the venerable edifice, with its two massive towers, and that western front of almost unparalleled beauty, whose multitudinous and ruined statues have become picturesque in their niches, and whose noble Gothic window is equally attractive even now, seen from without or within. One of the prettiest, the most picturesque of ecclesiastical edifices in Devonshire, was the chapel of St. Leonard's. It has been replaced by perhaps the very ugliest of modern architectural abominations. The ancient building was covered and crowned with ivy, through which portions of Gothic arches were here and there visible; but over the tower the green branches rose like a self-supported tiara, which was swayed backward and forward by the wind, and numerous birds made their nests and found shelter in its recesses. There are traditions enough connected with the chapel and its cemetery to furnish materials for a novel of the middle ages. There lived in a cave, hewn out of the bank opposite the entrance to the belfry, which had one cracked bell, a holy woman, whose steps never led her further than to the church-altar, or to a miraculous spring called Parker's Well, only a few hundred yards distant. This well had the reputation of restoring sight to the blind, and, even in my recollection, was visited by multitudes afflicted with eye diseases, who still attached supernatural virtues to the waters. A subterranean passage was said to give access from this neighbourhood to the galleries of the cathedral; and the road bears even to this hour the name of "Holloway." I have been often bidden when a child to listen to the rumbling echoes of the carts and waggons as they passed above, giving undoubted evidence of the existence of the ancient communication below. The fact is, that one of the common sewers of the city has its passage beneath the street. In former days a red-stone tower projected into the road, which was so narrow that two vehicles could with difficulty pass one another; and, as there was a rapid ascent and descent on both sides, accidents and interruptions frequently occurred. There is indeed a marvellous contrast between the business and bustle and urging ever forward which characterise the present time, and the lazy indifference and slothfulness which then seemed to influence both man and beast. Near to this spot, at the top of the hill, was a bank—though the hill has been lowered, and the bank walled up—overshadowed by enormous elms, of which a few still remain. Upon that bank a row of peasants and waggoners were almost always to be seen, their teams standing still, while they enjoyed their barley bread, and drunk their rough cider out of the little barrels. These were filled from time to time by their employers as part of their wages. Comparing the condition of the peasantry now, with what it was sixty years ago—wages advanced sixty per cent, instruction spreading, crime diminishing, domestic comforts, food, dress, furniture, wonderfully improved—who would venture to say that the former times were better than these!

The churchyard was as remarkable as the church; it was the common receptacle for the neighbourhood. It had never been consecrated, at least in Protestant times, and the dead of many discordant sects repose in peace under its once daisied turf. In fact, the place is full of

buried heresy. There, sleeps James Peirce, the great heresiarch of the west—the leader of free thought in Exeter a century and a half ago, when the great Presbyterian schism convulsed the Churches; a library might be filled with its tracts and sermons of the time, most of them dogmatical and furious, and few of them charitable or convincing. Mr. Peirce died with the stains of heresy upon him; but though it was not possible to deny him burial in the common homestead, the clergyman refused to allow the inscription which his friends and family had prepared to celebrate the virtues of their "reverend, learned, and pious" pastor. "Never," said the clerical bigot, "shall he be called reverend, for he was a schismatic; learned, for he was not educated in a university; nor pious, for he did not worship the Trinity"! And so, though the monument was one of the most prominent in the cemetery, it bore the simple words, "Mr. James Peirce's Tomb." No more. Some reckless hand has removed the tomb—whether under the inspirations of bigotry, I know not; but, after years of absence, I sought the old memento, and found it not; but there still exists a marble tablet in the vestry of George's Meeting-house, in which, after recording the many excellences of the good, learned, and reverend James Peirce, the inscription proceeds to record that he was interred in St. Leonard's churchyard, and "after death denied a just eulogium by the clergyman of that parish." The name of that clergyman is buried in the oblivion to which he would have condemned a name that stands out prominently among those who, in dark and dreary days, fought the battles of religious freedom, and taught their descendants how to struggle and how to succeed.

Tombs more distinguished were those of the Baring family—the foundations of whose fortunes were laid, as most of their mortal remains were deposited, in this locality. Over their resting-places towered some of those magnificent elm-trees which the Devonian soil, as has been often remarked, raises in unparalleled beauty and grandeur. I remember well that, when those tombs were supposed to be imperilled by the destruction of the old, and the construction of the new chapel, my father built a hut over them for their protection. No vestige of them now remains. They have been replaced by a simple square of stone, which concentrates in a line the names and dates of the founders of a family whose mercantile success and political eminence have given them a world-wide fame.

They came to Exeter from Bremen, and Matthew fixed himself at Larkbear (the Larrochbere of Saxon times), to carry on the woollen trade with foreign lands—a trade of which in the west of England Exeter was the centre.

The reputation and success of the house of the Barings was mainly owing to the business habits, the prudence, and the activity of the wife of Matthew, whose name was traditionally known as Madame Baring. The ladies, in those days, took an active part in the management of their husbands' affairs. They superintended the labours of the women engaged as *burlers*, who pulled the "goods" over benches, and with burling-irons, a sort of large sharply-pointed tweezers held in the right hand, picked out the *blacks*, the knots, and other defects left by the weavers, which, with a whisk in the left hand, they swept into open bags at their sides. It was one of the duties of the mistress, now and then, to go from one end to the other of the long line of burlers, encouraging the diligent, and reprehending the lazy. Matthew Baring fully appreciated the services of his wife, and built for her on the banks of the river, a handsome fishing-house of brick, from whose windows she could uninterruptedly and comfortably indulge in piscatorial amusements. Pollutions have driven away the fish, the fishing-house has been razed to its foundations, the fisher lady has been long slumbering under the turf of the St. Leonard's cemetery, and the memento raised over her burial-place by her eldest son, John, the senior partner of the great house of John and Francis Baring, has wholly disappeared. Most of the members of the family are interred in the churchyard just described, which was separated from their domicile of Mount Radford only by a bridge thrown across the public road, but some of them repose in the "Saint's Rest" of the Exeter Presbyterians, and others in a very pretty but obscure burial-place attached to a Unitarian chapel a few miles from the city.

John and Francis Baring were both men of singular sagacity. Perhaps they foresaw the decline and decay of that staple trade upon which their father had laid the foundations of his own and their prosperity—at all events, they sought a wider field than Exeter offered. I had in my possession a copy of a tender for part of a loan to the British government, in the reign of George the Third, in which the ambition of the great house of the Brothers Baring was limited to the adventure of three hundred pounds sterling. Two peerages and a baronetcy, and what millions upon millions have been since associated with the name! The history of Francis, his connexion with Dunning, his influence with William Pitt, how he sent his sons to travel in the Eastern and the Western world, the reputation they acquired, the alliances they formed, may be studied elsewhere; but of John, the Exonian, the future representative of his native city, a word or two may here be said.

He became almost the sole landed proprietor of the parish in which he lived, and in which he built his country-seat. The lands, which were afterwards sold, are now covered with houses; but in my boyhood it was a boast, my father being one of the Baring tenants, that in our community we had neither lawyer, nor parson, nor doctor, nor pauper, nor poor-rate, nor pound, nor barrack, nor soldier, nor tavern, nor alehouse, nor anything which would be called a nuisance. The

few labouring people were connected with the trade, and employment was never wanting.

John Baring established a bank; it enabled him to render valuable services to the freemen in whose hands was the representation of the city, and they returned him to parliament. His dress was singular. Coat, waistcoat, breeches, of a light speckled colour—it was called pepper and salt—silk stockings of the same, small steel buckles at his knees, large steel buckles on his shoes. He was a tall thin man, with powdered hair, and a sharp penetrating look, who seemed to measure with his gold-headed cane every step as he walked. The people called him "Old Turkey Legs." Almost everybody had a nickname in those days; but he could smile at the jest, as those legs, with the assistance of the electors, took him to the honourable House, and there and then and thus were sown the seeds of future greatness. The family adopted for their crest a bear (German, baer) with a silver ring in his nose. It would probably have been of gold had Matthew Baring been able to look into coming times.

Endeavouring to recal some of the personages who have passed away like shadows "from the sunshine to the sunless land," a crowd of figures present themselves characteristic of a state of society which has wholly departed. I have some difficulty in selecting from the multitude. The other day, looking over the old portfolio of one of the Exeter bankers and merchants, who was the terror of his circle, as his faithful but caricaturing pencil recorded the "veritable effigies" of the time, I could hardly fancy that pretty girls whom I well recollect, had ever been clad in garments so absurdly grotesque—such enormous bonnets, waists as high as their armpits, short petticoats to exhibit their flesh-coloured clocked silk stockings, high-heeled shoes, black patches on their face; or that gentlemen wore cocked-hats, cauliflower wigs or pigtails, ruffles, shorts and silks, buckles, and metal buttons.

But so they were, and so they are *not* now.

Magnates, magistrates, lawyers, doctors, divines—can they ever have been so ridiculous? Yes! I recognise their old familiar faces. There is S. F. M., with the president's arm-chair sticking to him. He never entered an assembly without exhibiting intense anxiety to be called upon to fill it. Will Mr. M. do us the favour? Then a complacent smile upon a visage naturally solemn and severe, a succession of courteous bows, and a slow hesitating march towards the head of the room. There is D. P., his hands behind him in his coat-pockets, looking at the stars, and certain to stumble over the first stone in his way. Alderman D.—was he really so perfect a picture of an owl, so sedate, and so stupid? And the clergy—Anglican and Dissenting—did they truly exhibit such expressions of polemical bitterness, of self-satisfied complacency? Was the cushion so vehemently thumped? Were the eyes so imposingly uplifted? Magna est veritas.

Two centuries ago, when there was an insufficient supply of small change and copper coinage issued from the Royal Mint, merchants and traders were in the habit of issuing brass halfpenny tokens for the convenience of their dependents, which were changed for silver when collected in sufficient amount. They generally bore some device indicative of the trade of the issuer; and trade was generally an inheritance from father to son. There still exist coins bearing the device of a wool-comb, with "John Bowring, of Chulmleigh," (near Exeter,) "his halfpenny, 1678." This family had for many generations, as manufacturers and fullers, been engaged in the woollen trade. C. B. was one of the last of its representatives in Exeter. He died half way between fourscore and fourscore years and ten. Many remember his serene and smiling countenance, his long silvery hair, his gentle voice, and how impossible it was to be near him without feeling happier in the mere reflection and reaction of goodness from his presence. He saw in his own person and property all the marks of decay, but hung to the fragments of a departing industry till it slipped wholly away from his keeping. First, one mill was abandoned, then a second. The number of millmen and tuckers was diminished by death, and with the departure of the trade from Exeter, they emigrated to other places, or took to other labour. C. B., who was a lover of music, was a friend of William Jackson, the organist of the cathedral, some of whose pieces, such as "Time has not thinned my flowing hair," live in many a memory. He was a lover of books, and no line of Shakespeare was unfamiliar to him. In his old age, while seated in his arm-chair, it was delightful to hear him constantly quote some passage appropriate to the daily events of life. But he lived on the past, lingering amidst the scenes of his early activity, and for years before his death (except to attend the religious services at the Unitarian meeting-house) scarcely ever wandered beyond the limits of his garden and paddock.

In Exeter, as in many other important seats of industry, the Dissenters, who were excluded from municipal dignities, took to money-making, as persecuted people frequently do, and found compensation and consolation in doing better, in a worldly point of view, than most of their neighbours. The mayor and corporation, grandly robed and furred, marched in stately style to the cathedral, headed by the sword-bearer, who wore a broad-brimmed copper hat, richly adorned, and the parade was the object of great awe to the little boys and girls who accompanied the procession. The civic dignitaries—and most dignified they were!—were composed mostly of the well-to-do shopkeepers, who were considered to represent the grandeur of Church and State; while those who failed in reverence for these time-honoured institutions and self-elected magistrates, were designated Jacobins, and in periods of excitement were burnt in effigy by the same classes who mastered the city on every fifth of November, crying:

Up with the ladder, and down with the rope,
And give me a penny to burn the old Pope.

In those days a few phrases coming from the lips of the ruling few were supposed to be a sufficient answer to the grievances of the subject many. "The people have nothing to do with the laws but to obey them;" "If they don't like their country, let them leave it;" "Glorious constitution;" "Envy and admiration of the world;" "Don't pretend to be wiser than your ancestors;" or, to confound all malcontents, and crush all sedition, the terrible weight of a Latin quotation, "Nolumus leges Angliæ mutari," was hurled at the head of grumblers.

I owed much to R. K. He was a man of kindly nature, somewhat slovenly except when powdered and puffed for company. I was ever discovering in him new proofs of intelligence (the monomania apart) and benignity. He had been a traveller, well acquainted with Spain, Italy, Portugal, and France, and their languages. He had a library rich in stores of Castilian and Tuscan literature. He introduced me to Don Quixote in the original, and taught me to pronounce the jotas and the thetas of that tongue. He was familiar with the distinctions between the Andalusian and the court idioms; and, finding me somewhat apt, and very grateful, took much trouble to solve my difficulties, and encourage my inquiries. In some of his oddities, he resembled the hero of La Mancha; and he had an old gardener—the father of Dowton the comedian—who might have passed for a Devonian Sancho Panza. Great controversies were carried on as to horticultural management, when the master, in very ancient and very loose slippers, in his flowing matinal garments, pointed out certain things to be done, which the vicegerent thought was an interference with the government of his own Barataria. Sometimes I was asked to dinner, and foreign luxuries were brought on the table—Spanish olives (they are larger and richer than the French); Chinese ginger (it is sweeter than the West Indian); and there was talk of pucheros and olla podridas, and fascinating descriptions of Mantillas and Basquiñas, and the bright-eyed, small-footed maidens of the Peninsula. I imbibed a love of travel, which I was afterwards able to indulge; and so well was I taught by my kind patron, that, when launched on the Peninsula during the great war, I was so much at home that I obtained the name of El Español Ingles. So easily are languages learnt, if properly taught. His brother was a stiff and solemn gentleman, who had a termagant wife. I was once sent to the lady with a request from her husband that she would let him have the newspaper, if she had done with it. I had innocently knocked at the front door, and was conducted to the drawing-room. "Was it *you* who had the impertinence to knock at the front door? The proper way for boys is through the servants' passage. What do you want?" I answered very humbly, "Mr. K. will be obliged to you, ma'am, for the newspaper, if you have read it." "Oh, oh! he wants the newspaper, does he?" shouted the irate lady—"wants the newspaper, does he? *Then* he shan't have it." Upon which she flung the newspaper upon the sofa, and seated herself upon it, with all the dignity of a conqueror. I took the message to the master, (?) who received it in meek quiescence. Yet he was an able man, was thought a superior writer, and whenever "the house" required any very important letter to be forwarded, was the chosen scribe. There was another merchant, J. C., who was of obscure peasant origin, born in the locality which George Bidder has since illustrated, but who owed his good fortune (for he became afterwards a partner with one of the Barings) entirely to the excellence of his commercial epistles. The ordinary state of mercantile correspondence was dull and common-place, such as may now be seen in the Complete Letter-writers of the time. The youth took to the study of Junius as a model; and, as everybody is really pleased with what is graceful and emphatic, his advancement followed as a matter of course. J. M., an energetic and ambitious man, endeavoured to associate imports from Russia and the north, with exports of woollens to the south; but his sagacity took him to a wider field. His descendants still retain possession of the local banking field, which the Barings, in their bolder and higher flight, abandoned long ago.

While R. K. was learned in the languages of the south, S. C. was equally master of those of the north, and most willing to aid the youths who were studying German and Dutch. The merchants were rather proud of their linguistic acquirements, and sought opportunities of showing how much they were at home when abroad, and abroad when at home. Languages are learnt easily by the instrumentality of the tongue, and, where neither bad grammar nor false pronunciation has ever been heard, a learner is not likely to fall into mistakes, any more than a child when taught its mother tongue correctly. S. C. was a Quaker, but represented the transition period, when the Quaker just began to accommodate himself to the fashions of the world, and when the ancient How art thee? and How do thee do? were replaced by improved syntax. The Quaker women were stiffer than the men, but when the change came over them, the passage from the grey and the grave to the gay and the gaudy, from the staid and sober to the brighter and the lighter colours, was more striking.

While the old staple trade was taking its flight from Devonshire, other manufactures, driven by the outrages of the Luddites and other secret combinations from central England, were established in the neighbourhood of Exeter. They found cheap and abundant water power, wages low, labour abundant, and, above all, peace and security against those interruptions which ignorance and violence directed against the mechanical improvements that diminished the cost and perfected the products of industry. The sagacity of John Heathcoat transferred to

Tiverton the beautiful tulle fabrics whose prosperity and progress in Nottinghamshire were menaced by the machine-breakers of his day—those workmen-conservatives who brought into the field of labour the determination to resist all innovations. The fulling-mills on the Exe have been turned to the grinding of corn, the breaking of bones, the sawing of timber, the manufacture of paper, and, for the most part, have become auxiliaries to agricultural interests.

On the whole, the results have been beneficial. Capital has sought, labour has found, and enterprise has encouraged, new engagements and employments, more profitable and productive than those which have been abandoned. Though the value of some species of property has been deteriorated, there has been a great augmentation in the value of the whole. The wages of labour have been raised, the population has doubled, and the sum total of social happiness has undoubtedly received a large addition.

The Devonshire woollen trade, though it has abandoned its old central seat, is still successfully carried on in some of the neighbouring localities, where manufacturers have availed themselves of the many modern mechanical improvements which, though they have superseded, or rather supplemented, manual labour in some of its applications, have given it additional and more remunerative employment in others. Emancipation and freedom, instead of privilege and protection, are becoming the watchwords of all industry. The legislative props which supported the rottenness of old monopolies are one after another removed; the dams and sluices which diverted the free waters from social to sinister interests, are gradually disappearing;

——all the past
Melts, mist-like, into brighter hours, and these
Are morn to more.

THE STRENGTH OF A LITTLE FLOWER.

THIS INCIDENT IS RELATED IN THE "EXPERIENCES OF A PRISON MATRON."

From the wicked woful streets
The prisoner is come
To do penance for wicked and woful deeds,
With the prison for a home.

She is callous, hard, and bold,
Reared in the ways of sin,
From her soul the woman seems driven out
And the devil entered in.

She has no belief in love,
You can rule her but by fear,
Speak to her gently in Christian-wise,
The reply is an oath or jeer.

Dark night had fallen down
On the darker night within
The prison's hard unflinching walls
That enclosed that world of sin.

I, in my nightly round,
Paused by that woman's door.
The silence of her stormy cell
Astonished me far more
Than oath or ribald shout or song
Her lips were wont to pour.

Propped on her sturdy arms
Her dark and sinful face
Was bent above the table bare;—
At once I marked the place

Whereon her gaze was fixed,
And there before her lay,
A daisy she had plucked by stealth
From out the yard that day.

And while I gazed, her face
Contracted as in pain,
And o'er her coarse and swarthy cheeks
Down fell the tearful rain.

And on her linkëd arms
Her heavy head fell low,
And sobs convulsed the woman's frame,
Bent with its load of woe.

Months upon months went by,
When one day I, by chance,
Took up the Bible in her cell,
And through the leaves did glance:

Between the pages spread,
The withered daisy lay.
God has a language of His own
We cannot write or say.

TWO GENTLEMEN USHERS.

One day, in the neighbourhood of Regent-street, I was attracted by a lamp, projected from one of the houses, bearing the words "Scholastic Agency" upon it. Although diffident as to the high class of appointments likely to be met with here, I made bold to enter, for I had been told that the best way to read quietly and grind for Oxford was to get quarters as tutor in a school. Up-stairs I went, as directed by a hand and writing on the wall, and in a room upon the first landing found many persons assembled. There was a table in the middle, at which sat a gentleman, who reminded one of the men we occasionally see playing the cornet-à-piston on the edge of the pavement. He had a round head, covered with long dirty black and grey hair, a moustache and imperial. Near the window was a desk, at which was seated a youth, busily engaged in making entries into a book which lay before him. The sofa and chairs were entirely occupied by persons of depressed aspect, who looked like foreign patriots awaiting sentence, yet uncertain as to whether they were to be hanged for treason or restored to freedom by a noble-minded conqueror. The gentleman at the table was "Professor Crotter;" the youth was his clerk; the company assembled were members of the noble army of ushers; or, as they would put it, "gentlemen of the scholastic profession," waiting to be engaged by "principals" who were in other rooms, and had at the moment other gentlemen with them under examination.

The whole company of the unoccupied gentlemen stared at me when I entered; their passive countenances making a faint and melancholy endeavour to express astonishment.

The gentleman at the table rose, made a respectable shopman's bow, and desired me to take a seat. I did so, and began to state my

business, observing that I had a very attentive audience in the regiment of despondents. I said that I had called on account of a person, in whom I was much interested, who wished to get a situation in a school. I was asked if he had been "out" before, to which I answered No. This was a drawback. I was informed that there were many lucrative and desirable appointments on the books, and a paper, headed "College of Tutors," was handed to me to be filled up by my friend. It contained a series of questions as to Greek, Latin, mathematics, and so forth; and whether "of any university." Also a notification that five per cent would be charged upon the year's income upon the applicant obtaining a situation. I asked what sort of schools they had on their books, and was told "very high ones." Thereby emboldened, and by this time having shaken down, I said that I was thinking of taking something of the sort myself; and, dropping my friend, began to inquire upon my own account.

The situations exactly suited to myself appeared to be very numerous, and I had a list of gentlemen given to me, upon whom I was directed to call. First stood the name of Dr. Clackmannan, of South Aberdeen Collegiate School, Surrey. "Evidently highly respectable," I said to myself. "I will make it my business to call at once." I paid a shilling to the principal of the College of Tutors, to defray any expense that he might be at in writing to me, and took leave.

By the time I arrived at "South Aberdeen Collegiate School" it had become dark; but I saw by the gas that I was before a large old house of the reign of Queen Anne, built of red brick, with a fore-court and high iron gate. On either side was what appeared to be a carriage entrance, composed of green doors like those of a coach-house. Upon them were written, in large white capitals, the imposing words: "Collegiate School." I pulled a bell-handle; a tremendous bell just inside rang close to my head, and presently came out a prim servant in a clean white apron.

She showed me into a dining-room. Before the fire was drawn a sofa, upon which reclined, smoking a pipe, a fat gentleman dressed in black. By the side of the fire sat a little old lady. Upon one side hung an enormous portrait of a complacent youth in cap and gown.

The doctor was certainly very fat: and was dressed in the old clerical style, with tremendous collars and an expansive white cravat. He didn't ask me to take a seat; so I sat down, and told, in a few words, upon what business I had called. The doctor smiled, and bent his head. He informed me that he had had applications from several gentlemen; that the master was required to teach Latin, Greek, French, English, &c., to live in the house, and to share the work and supervision with another gentleman, the recompense for the same being thirty-five pounds a year. I asked what the holidays were, and was informed that the *vacation* amounted to about twelve weeks in the course of the year. I said that I had been in her Majesty's service, but had left it to go to the Bar when I had taken a degree at Oxford; for which university it was my object to read up. He inquired, "What regiment?" I replied, "No regiment, but the Royal Navy," and that I had been in the Russian and Chinese wars. He said, "Oh, indeed!" smiled, and said I should hear from him.

The next name on my list was that of Mr. Hypotheneuse, of Apennine-grove. To reach this academic shade, I took, next morning, a long caravan passage in an omnibus, yesterday's headache still clinging to me; and, after much subsequent wandering, I found myself in a drawing-room "replete with every elegance," and which it was painfully apparent was never used except for the reception of parents and guardians. Entered to me Mr. Hypotheneuse. We looked each other over as I returned his bow.

This gentleman was an unassuming great man. The effect of his remarks was that he was a high and mighty person; but humble minded. He wished his masters to look upon him as a senior friend. It was his desire that they retired to bed at ten o'clock; and, although he did not order them to leave off smoking, he nevertheless forbade it on or near his premises. Like Dr. Clackmannan, he took my address, and said I should hear from him.

I shortly afterwards got a letter to say that he had made up his mind to employ a "native" to teach foreign languages. I concluded that he meant an oyster, as a human being can but teach one native language; that is to say, his own.

Upon the same day I received a note from another great man who diffused knowledge at Brighton. It ran as follows:

> Sir,—You can, if you like, see me punctually at eleven on Wednesday, at my tailor's, Mr. So-and-so, Leadenhall-street, with regard to applying to obtain the vacant situation in my establishment.

I also received a notice from the Professor of the College of Tutors to attend at that institution upon a given day to see Mr. Shrimp, of Margate. I did so, and had to wait until another suppliant had been examined. This individual came forth depressed and crestfallen.

Mr. Shrimp seemed diffident as to whether his situation was suited to me, informing me that he gave but twenty pounds a year. The duty, he said, was to teach English, arithmetic, and Latin grammar, and never to lose sight of the young gentlemen (who were all respectable). I asked him how the country was looking, and withdrew.

On reaching home, I received a note from Dr. Clackmannan, saying that he had accepted the offer of my services. I thereupon bethought me of taking a cruise to South Aberdeen to find out something more about my preferment.

When I was shown in to the doctor, he was mounting some drawings in his dining-room, and smoking a cigar. He did not rise, but said, "Ah, so you've come down." I replied that I had done myself the pleasure of calling on

him to inquire more particularly what my duties were to be.

He said, "Quite right—quite right," and still went on with what he was doing. A parcel of schoolboy drawings were before him, consisting of "Fishermen Mending their Nets," "The War Horse on the Eve of Battle," and such like, together with a pot of paste and some cardboard.

The drawings were presently all finished, and Dr. Clackmannan rose. I began to cross-examine him. He was evidently a good fellow. He answered all my queries at once, and in the most straightforward manner. His degree was LL.D., but of some university with a strange name. I presumed, from his talking of his "late wife," that he was a widower; but he said no, that he found he could not get on without a wife, and that he was married to the lady whom I had seen on my former visit.

The doctor having informed me that it was usual for himself and masters to wear the college cap and gown (and that the boys also wore the cap out of doors), I made a pilgrimage into Holywell-street and inquired for a gown. Dr. Clackmannan had supplied me with a cap from his store, at six and sixpence, observing that he didn't want to make a profit out of *me*. In the first old-clothes-shop I entered, I was offered the gown of a Q.C., and Moses Levy seemed surprised that it didn't suit my views. I tried another shop, and was here shown the gown of a Cambridge M.A., inclining towards a russet green from age. The Jew said that the price of it was a guinea, and asked me whether I wanted "the 'at," adding, that he concluded I was going to get married. I didn't exactly like the gown, and also thought a guinea too much for it, so I crossed the road (in consequence of a hint) to a certain College, where I found the porter, and asked him whether he had any gowns on hand. He had not, but knew somebody who had. He disappeared, and presently returned with a small gown on his arm. So I closed the bargain at seven and sixpence, taking the gown away with me wrapped up in brown paper. I was now thoroughly caparisoned, and when, shortly afterwards, term commenced, was in marching order for South Aberdeen.

Mrs. Clackmannan, upon my arrival, fetched the college cap I had bought, and said that I should find "the other master" in the dining-hall. I was rather anxious to see what "the other master" was like, for I am of a companionable disposition, and like to have some one to talk to over a smoke in the evenings. In the dining-hall I saw seated near the stove a thin little man, squinting horribly behind his spectacles. He was reading out of a book to a little boy on his knee, a pleasant mildness in the action and the manner of it. The little boy at once rose and shook hands with me, and asked me "whether I were the other new master."

The gentleman rose diffidently and made a bow, observing that he thought it likely that it would rain. He spoke very respectfully, and said "sir." I concluded that he looked after the wardrobes, and presently left the room, thinking I might find "the other master" (perhaps an Oxford M.A.) in the playground.

But no, there were only a few of the boys, who also came and shook hands with me. I asked to be shown to my room, and was taken to a lean-to attic at the top of the house. I looked round in astonishment, and asked the handmaiden whether she were sure that that room was for me. She seemed to have expected some such question, and grinned. The peculiar dungeon-like feeling about the room I soon discovered arose from damp.

I washed my hands and brushed my hair, by way of doing something. Presently a bell rang; then another; and, on making my way to the dining-room, I found all hands had been piped for tea: grace being said as I entered.

There were three long tables, two at one end, one at the other. The two were covered with rows of cups and saucers, and plates of very thick bread and very thin butter. The one table had an old cover on it, and a large urn. Finding, on closer observance, that Mrs. Clackmannan was behind the urn, I advanced to the table. She said in a melancholy voice as she stirred the teapot with a spoon, "Oh, Mr. Hope, will you sit down?" and I presently found myself drinking a cup of weak tea, with the gentleman of the squint sitting opposite to me. We were not introduced, but I heard him called "Mr. Forfar," and discovered that he was my colleague. He and I were, therefore, "the staff of able and talented professors resident on the premises."

There we all were, then, weighing together about forty-three stone. Dr. Clackmannan twenty-four, Mr. Forfar seven, myself twelve; a pretty set of intellectual graces. After tea had been removed and the company had retired, I sat myself down on the deal table, and held discourse with the other able and talented professor. He was an odd little man of thirty-something, dressed severely in black: black frock-coat, black open waistcoat, showing black glass studs. He was a very conceited little man. (It is part of the business to be so in the scholastic profession.) He was about five feet four inches in height, with brown hair and whiskers, and a hatchet face. The squint was very horrible. One eye anchored to an object, while the other took a cruise about the ceiling. Mr. Forfar talked of his former engagements, and of the respect with which he had invariably been treated while holding them.

Supper was laid at nine, and we went to the table to await the coming of the doctor. He didn't arrive until half-past nine. When he had sat a little time after his supper, he retired, shaking hands, and wishing us good night. I immediately began to light up for a smoke, as did also the other learned professor, when out went the gas, and we could only see the lights of each other's cigars. It seemed as if a fairy had suddenly transformed us into two fire-flies. The room was, like the pavilion of a sultana, in the open air, and was composed chiefly of windows and doors. I groped my way to the door

nearest to the house, tumbling in my course over some boots, and knocking over the large school-bell.

Like the gentleman in Beauty and the Beast, I saw a light ahead, and on making towards it, found it came from the kitchen door. Looking in thereat, I saw the servants sitting round a comfortable fire, and tapped the door with my fingers, when the servant whom I had first seen advanced towards me. She was in command. I asked for a light, whereupon she gave me a withering look, and said that if I wanted one I knew where to get it, and must fetch it myself. One of the other servants immediately rose, and was kind enough to take me up the kitchen stairs to a slab, where there were some very greasy tin candlesticks, without snuffers or extinguishers. I was then told that it was time for me to go to rest.

I had not been in my room five minutes before a tap came at my door, and, on opening it, I found two of the servants standing there, who immediately put up their fingers, and said "Hush!" They had come to tell me never to mind "Smith." That she was licensed and encouraged by the master and mistress to offend and insult every one, and that when I wanted anything done, the other servants would be happy to do it for me. They also asked if I had been in a "situation" before.

When I laid down to rest, I felt that I had something whereon to reflect. I had been at school as a boy myself—at a public school. There was not a master there to whom a servant would have dared to be uncivil, much less would it have occurred to any servant to come to him in a clandestine manner at his bedroom door.

I began to think that as they were masters, therefore I could not be a master. What was I? Was I an "usher?"

Next day, I felt that it was only due to myself to mention to the doctor the rudeness of his servant. He didn't seem astonished, but smiled, and said that he could quite understand my feelings. He added, that the servant was only pointing out to me my duty. He then smiled again, and walked away, putting an end to further remonstrance.

The doctor, after dinner, explained to my colleague (whom I discovered to be also a new comer) and myself that we were to take "duty" alternately. Duty implied the supervision of the young gentlemen out of school. It consisted in getting up in the morning at half-past six, working for an hour and a half before breakfast, and never losing sight of the young gentlemen all day until they were in their beds.

I happened to notice at tea that the doctor watched me when I took butter, and then looked round at his wife with an injured expression. From that moment he was an altered man to me.

The system of the school was rather subversive in its practice. The boys could do everything they liked; the masters nothing. I tried to introduce discipline and obedience, but was very soon remonstrated with by my superior, who said that the pupils would all be taken away if not indulged. Here was a prospect! Order had to be kept and a control maintained over young gentlemen who would be taken away if order and control were enforced.

One day while "on duty," I happened to dirty my hands with the football, and so requested Mr. Forfar to come out and look after the young gentlemen for a few minutes. I was not long absent, but when I returned I was accosted by Dr. Clackmannan, who came close up to me, and looked straight in my face, as though he were going to box my ears. Fortunately he did not do so, but said, in a loud voice, "Look here, sir, let it be distinctly understood that when I pay gentlemen for their services, I expect them to do their work."

When we met the next day, his manner was decidedly cordial, and he went so far as to make a remark about the weather. I fancied that perhaps he felt some slight pangs of remorse racking his bosom; but was soon undeceived. When we sat down to breakfast, I perceived that poor Mr. Forfar had been going wrong, even though it were "so early in the morning." The poor little man had neglected something which should be done at that early hour. Consequently Mr. Forfar appeared so bad a sinner upon this occasion, that I became a saint by contrast, and was consequently in possession of the great man's high esteem.

The doctor's time for settling matters was, generally speaking, at meals, and we had not been seated long, when he began on his new grievance, looking round repeatedly at his little wife for her approval.

"I beg to point this out to you, Mr. Forfar," said he. "You've not been in my house long, and if you're not more careful you won't be. I see that you're inclined to shirk your work, but I'll make short work of you, I can tell you."

Poor Mr. Forfar! He fixed one eye on the mustard-pot, while the other took a cruise round the table, and finally settled on the salt-cellar. He spoke not, but was the very picture of a squinting penitent. After breakfast the doctor caught me, and took me for a stroll round his garden. He was remarkably friendly and confidential.

"I find I've been nicely taken in with that gentleman," he observed; "but if he tries any of his tricks with me, I'll kick him out of my house summarily."

A couple of hours after this, I had occasion to find fault with a young gentleman whom no means of persuasion would induce to attend to what was going on. I called him up, looked severely in his face, and addressed to him a few words of admonition. This mode of proceeding caused the young imp to burst forth in a torrent of grief. Dr. Clackmannan, disturbed by the unusual sounds, looked up and called across the schoolroom that I was "not to do that again." He came to me afterwards in an apologetic manner, but I said that he injured himself, not me, by such displays. He thereupon informed me that if the boy were removed from

the school, he'd make me pay for it. I suggested that we should leave that an open question, and came to the conclusion that I could not stand much more.

That day I was on duty, so little Mr. Forfar took a walk in the evening, and did not return until after supper. He then happened to be rather thirsty, and took the liberty of asking for a glass of beer. The confidential servant thereupon went scuttling up to the doctor, and communicated to him the startling request. I should mention, that the only place we had to sit in was the large school dining-room. Little Mr. Forfar took off his useful Wellington boots, put on his carpet slippers, put his little feet up in a chair, and began telling me where he had been, when the door opened, and Dr. Clackmannan's stomach entered, followed by Dr. Clackmannan himself. He stood a mass of dignity, glaring through his enormous spectacles at my poor little companion, who grew nervous under the glance, fidgeted in his chair, and put his feet to the ground. He then took out his handkerchief, and began to rub his nose.

"Well, I'm sure," at last said Dr. Clackmannan, "are we in America, gentlemen?"

"No, sir, South Aberdeen," answered poor little Mr. Forfar, approaching the great man, and quivering from head to foot.

"Look here, Mr. Forfar," said the doctor. "I've come down to tell you that I keep neither a lodging-house nor a public-house, and that if you're not in at meals you'll just go without. That's all I have to say to you."

The door closed, and we were alone.

The next morning at breakfast my poor little friend was again in dire trouble. "I can assure you, sir, that's the reason," he was saying, as I took my seat.

"Don't tell me anything of the kind, Mr. Forfar."

"Well, sir, I should really have been down in time if it hadn't been for that: you can ask the boys if it is not so."

"The fact is, Mr. Forfar, that I consider you such a despicable little liar, and so utterly devoid of honour, that I wouldn't believe you on your oath!"

That was what Dr. Clackmannan said. I am detailing actual experience, without colouring or inventing any incident. Poor little Forfar looked indeed the picture of penitent misery.

"Well, sir," said he, "I'm sorry that you should have formed that opinion of me."

I must confess that I was startled as much by the reply as by the insult.

Mr. Forfar was evidently becoming very ill, and in a highly nervous state. The constant insult preying upon his weak mind made him totally unfit for work. His friends advised him "to give warning." The doctor, however, had such terrors for him that he had not the courage to say he would not stop. At last he wrote a notice, with the help of a relation who was a lawyer's clerk. It was a strictly legal document, and elaborately worded, looking very lengthy and formidable. The thing to do, however, was to deliver it. That was the push. The poor little man lay awake all night with the heavy business on his mind, and in the morning looked like a person in the last stage of consumption. He was "all of a twitter." When the doctor came in and said "Good morning," I saw a cap and gown bolt fairly out of the room.

Mr. Forfar did not reappear; so, after breakfast, I made a pilgrimage to find him. He had thrown himself on his bed. His movable eye was wandering round the room in search of something; probably the "happy land of Canaan." I rushed to my room for some brandy, as he seemed in a fit; and, having poured some down his throat, his eye came to anchor, and he recognised me. At length Mr. Forfar returned to duty.

A few evenings after, I was walking round the playground, when I perceived some one running rapidly across the fields towards me. He presently threw himself at my feet on the grass. He was a "parlour boarder," a fellow as big as myself, and nearly as old. He asked me if I would kindly give him my advice. I said that as far as was consistent with my position I should not object to do so.

It appeared that he had met in the village a young lady of "considerable personal attractions," to whom he ventured to give looks of admiration and a sweet smile. This mode of proceeding having been noticed by a couple of heavy brothers in attendance, they assaulted and drove him away, much discomfited. I looked grave, said it was a foolish affair altogether, and, as to advice, that he must make the best of a bad job.

The first time the doctor went out he heard of the whole affair. Now it so happened that the father of this young fellow was in India, and, moreover, did not pay up, so he was liable to the penalties of his misconduct. The doctor came fuming in, and gave me a full account of the discovery he had made. He presently asked me if I had heard anything of the matter. I replied that I had. Upon which I was attacked for not having repeated it. One or two remarks followed, when Dr. Clackmannan observed:

"If I did as I ought, I should *horsewhip* you, sir."

I controlled my immediate impulse, and told him that if he were inclined for real "business" in that line, I would put down five pounds on the event. He thanked me in an altered tone, and said that he didn't want to appear in the papers. I said that I would keep it very quiet if we could come to terms. I then wrote him a notice, which I forwarded at once.

The next day he did not wish me good morning, and looked remarkably black as we sat down to breakfast. There happened to be a cold roast round of beef before him, which he set about carving. He helped every one but myself, and then filled his own plate. I sat very quietly for a few minutes, until I saw the first mouthful go into his capacious mouth, when it became evident that he meant me to go without. This was unpleasant, to say the least of it.

Now, there happened to be several young gentlemen in the school who, for the consideration of thirty shillings a quarter, were allowed meat for breakfast, and these young gentlemen were standing round the doctor, plate in hand, waiting until he had taken the edge off his appetite and was at leisure to help them.

I said, "I'll trouble you for some beef, doctor;—you haven't the politeness to ask me."

The doctor replied, "No, Mr. Hope, until you've apologised to me for your conduct yesterday, you mustn't expect any of the courtesies of life from me."

"Courtesies, indeed!" said I. "You've omitted what any person with the slightest feeling of decency would not think of overlooking."

"You shall not have any beef."

"Won't I?" said I.

I seized the dish; the doctor clawed the beef, and in making too sure of it, plumped it into his own lap. I, on the other hand, in the fulness of my eloquence, flourished the carving-knife, at which the doctor seemed to wince, and his little old wife said, with a whine, "Oh, how very dreadful, *dee*—ar."

I immediately prepared for action. The doctor rose, the mass of underdone beef fell with a thud upon the floor, when the door opened and in walked poor little Forfar, late for breakfast, and all unconscious of what was going forward. He approached his seat, which was unfortunately next to the doctor, and tried to advance a small remark about the weather. It was of no use. The doctor turned on him.

"You're another of the same sort," vociferated the great man. "What do you mean by coming down late to breakfast?"

"I'm very sorry, sir."

"Sorry! Yes; but you shan't be sorry again, for out of my house you go this very morning: get out of the room." The poor little creature recoiled, and left the room. I quietly sat down and finished my breakfast, when I said calmly to the doctor, "Well, I'm off now;" to which he made no answer. I went to my bedroom, and was putting up my things, when I heard sounds of the doctor's voice in Mr. Forfar's room: "Now then, look alive and be off, for the sooner I see you and your traps out of my house the sooner I shall feel comfortable." I fancied he would pay me a visit next, so I took off my coat, but he did not come. I carried my traps down stairs, and returned to my room for something left behind. I again heard the doctor's voice. This time it was outside Mr. Forfar's door: "If you can't hurry yourself, I'll help you." There was then a loud noise like something rolling down stairs, and I was fearful that my poor little brother master was being "helped" down. I went to the scene of action, and burst out laughing; for there stood the gigantic fat doctor at the top of the stairs, and the little Mr. Forfar quivering in every muscle, trying to dodge past him and get away. The doctor had kicked his portmanteau from the top of the stairs to the bottom, and had frightened the poor little man out of what few wits he had left to him.

I got a cab, and, as we drove off, waved my hand to the doctor (who stood at the top of the steps), with a "Good-bye, old fellow! You can go to the 'College of Tutors' and get some more resident professors!"

WILD-BOAR HUNTING IN INDIA.

This sport is far superior to fox-hunting in England. Perhaps in fox-hunting more skill is required to "pick" the fences and choose a good line of country, but an old and experienced boar-hunter will tell you that it is not an easy task to give a good account of a "long lean tusker" with the condition of a Derby favourite, and the cunning of a Derby favourite's owner. You must in most cases follow his line of country, which is invariably the worst he can choose;—over rocky ground intersected with deep nullahs and ravines, and not unfrequently, if he can find it, through short thorny jungle, or over black rotten soil, riven and cracked in all directions. A gallop at racing pace over such ground, with a long spear in the rider's hand, and the prospect of a charge from the foe in the rider's mind's eye, require nerve and skill.

The low price of grain, and the moderate rate of servants' wages, enables most officers in India to keep two or three horses, and a "tattoo:" a most useful and enduring little animal, that fully supplies the place of a cover hack. In most "pig-sticking" countries the horses are reserved solely for that purpose, and are kept in race-horse condition, for the pace they have to maintain, although rarely extending beyond four miles at a stretch, is such that good condition is absolutely indispensable. The tattoo carries his owner to the meet (not unfrequently thirty miles distant); to parade in the morning; and to the mess-room at night.

In most stations where the neighbouring country affords "pig-sticking," a tent club is constituted; each member subscribing a few rupees monthly, and so forming a fund, out of which the "shikaree" and beaters are paid. In general the villagers are very ready and willing to give every information in their power concerning the haunts of the boar, for the damage he does in the sugar-cane, kates, and cholum-fields is very great indeed. A "sounder" of hog will very frequently travel ten or fifteen miles in a night in search of food, and will canter the same distance back in the morning; but occasionally, in quiet parts, they will lie down in fields that have grain high enough to afford them shelter, and will remain there.

The best hunting-grounds are the large sandy plains, with here and there a narrow long belt of toddy jungle. In these jungles the wild-boar delights. The club "shikaree" is constantly away on the look-out for marks or news of hog, and, as soon as he has obtained authentic intelligence of a sounder, he returns immediately to

give information to the "sahib log." The next day is fixed upon for the hunt, and away goes the "shikaree" again to the villages near the appointed rendezvous to collect beaters. Tents, servants, provisions, and beer (the last a most indispensable adjunct), are sent on by each sportsman, and in the evening all start on their "tattoos" for the meet. These meetings are by no means the least agreeable part of the business, when all are seated outside the tents after dinner, imbibing brandy-pawny and smoking cheroots. But many cheroots and much brandy-pawny are not beneficial to the nerves, so the wisest and best sportsmen retire early.

Betimes in the morning the camp is all alive. Horses neigh, horsekeepers shout to one another, and cries for coffee and boots resound on all sides. Daylight in India bursts suddenly with a flash upon the sight, and, though a man has begun to dress in the dark and with the aid of candles, before he has finished it is broad bright day.

On coming forth under such circumstances, the sight is pretty and exhilarating. The snowy tents pitched here and there among the green and shady mangoe-trees; the picketed horses in the act of being "marlished" and prepared for the hunt; "boys" boiling coffee at a fire made under an old mangoe, and at which three or four followers are toasting their hands and squatting; a small bonfire, around which are seated some two hundred individuals of all ages and descriptions, but nearly all alike as to squalor and dirt, the sweat caused by former days of toil being apparent on their bodies in the form of a dry white scurf, so that they remind one of a cab-horse that has dried in the wind. It is not cold; there is a nice cool soft and refreshing breeze; but natives, even in the heat of the summer, invariably crouch round a fire in the mornings.

A cup of coffee and cheroot, and we are ready to start for the cover, but before doing so we may glance at one or two of the most prominent men in the hunt, most of whom are out now, looking to their horses and gear: a precaution never to be forgotten by a careful huntsman. The first to attract attention, is a tall good-looking young fellow talking to his horsekeeper in a jargon he fondly supposes to be Hindostanee, but which sorely puzzles his man, who has the strongest possible idea that it is not, and the weakest possible idea what it is. The rosy colour of his cheeks, and the incipient down upon his lip (which he is constantly stroking as he speaks), denote the youngster coming under the denomination of "griffin." This is his first essay at pig-sticking, and all last night he disturbed the other occupants of the tent he slept in, by jumping up, over and over again, to see if it were nearly morning. Yesterday, too, his unfortunate tattoo, with exceedingly nobby-looking legs, was made to go nearly double distance by reason of his rider's constantly rushing off after some jackal or antelope, with a wild hope of spearing the creature—and at other times he carried his spear always poised and unpleasantly near to the small of his next neighbour's back. But time and practice will correct that, for his heart is in the right place. He is looking with admiring eyes upon a wiry bull-necked Persian horse, which no amount of argument will persuade him is not an Arab of the purest breed. It looks sulky just now, probably foreseeing a hard day's work. At a little distance from this ardent young sportsman is a small spare wiry man of about fifty years of age, as straight as an arrow, dressed in an old-fashioned but neat brown coat and trousers to match, and a flat low-crowned hat nearly the colour of his coat. His features are sharp, and tanned with exposure to the climate, but he has a bright piercing eye. He has been some thirty years in the service, only three of which have been passed in England. But he is as hard as he looks, and would outlive any younger man in a hard day's work. He is as good a sportsman as he is an officer, and he is considered to be one of the best in the service. The grey muscular Arab that he is mounted on, is the very counterpart of its rider, and in condition to gallop for a man's life. All its equipments are in first-rate order—so is his horsekeeper, who is just now shouldering a serviceable Joe Manton, and a spear with a head so bright that it glistens again in the sun. The next person, with a face like Don Quixote's, barring the beard, and with a complexion perhaps a little more ruddy than the famous knight, has an immensely long body and very short legs, and is clothed in a large-patterned check cotton cloth jacket, of a cut peculiarly its owner's. He is smoking a huge Trichinopoly cheroot, and is a mighty collector of cheroots. Also, of boots: rows upon rows of which, in immense numbers, decorate all his rooms.

But the coolies, headed by the "shikaree," are moving slowly forward in the direction of a long narrow belt of toddy jungle: a most likely looking spot. The "shikaree" has an old single-barrel gun, his badge of office, and a large broad-bladed knife stuck in his girdle. Each coolie is armed with a thick long bamboo, and very many of them have tom-toms, cholera horns, and rattles. The toddy bund, which extends nearly due east and west, is about a mile long, and a quarter of a mile broad. On the north side there is a sandy plain stretching away some three or four miles, and bounded by a low range of rocky hills covered with cactus and thorn-bushes. This is the direction the boar will most probably take, and as there are beaters enough to extend along the whole line of the bund, it is decided to beat it from south to north. A short council is held as to where the different horsemen shall place themselves, and soon the signal for the commencement of the beat is given. Then arises most unearthly noises; noises calculated, one would say, to frighten the most courageous of beasts, and noises that no human beings but natives could make. But to the "pig-sticker" it is a charming noise, and as melodious to him as the whimper

of the fox-hound is to the English sportsman. Unearthly as the uproar is, the boar but sulkily responds to it, and jogs slowly and stubbornly but silently along the undergrowth. Just previous to breaking cover he stops, as it were, to consider his line of country, then suddenly leaps forth with a long lobbing canter that does not seem to be fast, but which will try the speed of the fleetest horse in the hunt. A shriek of "Gone away!" and some twenty horsemen burst forth from the cover like so many devils. The boar slightly increases his pace, and the race fairly sets in. A little to the right it is rather rocky, and there are some ugly dry water-courses which he thinks will puzzle his enemies, so he makes for them. But all his tactics are of no avail. A grim-bearded old stager, mounted on a flea-bitten grey Arab, that bounds over the rocks and nullahs like an antelope, has been slowly but surely creeping up; and before the boar has completed two-thirds of his journey, he finds this cool and determined-looking customer riding alongside of him. Such presumption makes him whet his tusks again with rage, and turning short round with a couple of savage grunts, he charges ferociously, but it won't do. The spear is down in an instant, and by his own impetuosity he has stabbed himself deeply just above the shoulder-blade; and the gallant flea-bitten grey, with a light bound forward, has kept clear of his tusks. His fate is now sealed, for the delay occasioned by the charge has let up some of the other huntsmen. He charges first on one and then on the other, receiving deadly wounds each time. At last, exhausted by loss of blood, without a groan or a grunt, he sighs his last breath away. It is useless to attempt to beat the same piece of jungle over, for those hog that remained in when the first broke cover have long ago sought refuge in flight in another direction; but the "shikaree" knows of another likely spot some three miles distant, and it is immediately decided to proceed thither. This time a whole sounder break forth at once, and the hunting-party is broken up into two or three different lots. Two huge tuskers and one sow are the result.

HALF A MILLION OF MONEY.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "BARBARA'S HISTORY."

CHAPTER LXV. THE LAST OF THE BATTLE.

It was now nearly four o'clock in the afternoon. Throughout the search at the barricade, Saxon had seen the shells flying at a great height overhead, and heard the battle going on unceasingly in the streets of the town. Sometimes the sounds advanced, sometimes retreated; but never ceased for one minute together. Finding at length that neither friends nor foes came round in their direction, the men posted at the barricade became impatient, and dropped away one by one; and presently Saxon, being to all appearance no more likely to find his friend in one place than another, followed their example.

He traversed one whole street without seeing a living creature; then, coming to a cross-road, paused and listened. The musketry now seemed to be very distant, but he could not tell precisely from what quarter the sound proceeded. While he was yet hesitating, a couple of Neapolitan soldiers came running towards him. Seeing an armed Garibaldian, they stopped short, as if doubting which way to turn; and Saxon called to them to surrender.

At that moment, some six or eight red-shirts made their appearance at the top of the street, in full chase. The Neapolitans immediately fired upon Saxon, flung away their rifles, and fled down a by-street to the left.

But the balls glanced harmlessly by, and Saxon, anxious to know how the great interests of the day were faring elsewhere, went on his way, and left the fugitives to their pursuers.

A few steps further on, he fell in with a detachment of Tuscans led by young Beni, now on foot.

"Holà! amico," cried the Palermitan, "where do you come from?"

"From the barricade in the Via Lombardi. And you?"

"From the beach, where those cursed Regi have been pouring down shot and shell as thick as fire-stones from Etna."

"How goes the day?"

"Triumphantly. We are driving them up towards the castle from all sides. Come and see!"

So Saxon fell in with the Tuscan company; and as they pressed up against the hill, winding round by a steep lane on the eastern side of the town, the young men, in a few hurried sentences, exchanged such news as each had to tell.

"The whole of the lower part of the town is ours," said Beni. "Medici's men have done wonders—the Genoese carabineers have lost half their number—Peard's company has possession of an old windmill on the heights above the castle, whence they have rifled the enemy clear out of the northern works."

"This is great news!"

"It *is* great news. Before another hour is past, we shall have them all shut up in the castle, like mice in a trap."

"Where is your horse?"

"Shot under me, half an hour ago. Where is your friend?"

"Safe, I hope. He vanished in the mêlée down at the barricade. I have not seen him since."

"Silence! I hear a tramp of feet. Halt!"

The column halted, and in the sudden silence that ensued, the approaching footsteps of a considerable body of men were distinctly audible.

It was an exciting moment. The lane was winding, steep, and narrow. On one side rose a stupendous cliff of solid rock; on the other ran a low wall, overhanging the poorest quarter of the town. A worse place for a hostile encounter could scarcely have been selected; but the young Palermitan, unused to command as he was, at once saw the difficulty of his position, and prepared to meet it.

Silently and promptly, he drew up his little

troop across the road—the front row lying down, the second kneeling, the third standing—all ready to greet the enemy with a deadly fire as soon as they should come in sight. In the mean while, Saxon had slung his rifle over his shoulders and begun climbing the face of the cliff. Where there was footing for a goat there was always footing for him; and almost before Beni knew what had become of him, he was posted behind an overhanging bush some twenty feet above. About a dozen others immediately followed his example, till every shrub and projecting angle of rock concealed a rifle.

The Garibaldians had but just completed their preparations, when the white cross-belts of the Neapolitans appeared at the turn of the road, some sixty yards ahead.

Evidently unprepared to find their passage resisted, they recoiled at sight of the Garibaldians, who instantly poured in their first volley. They then fired a few shots and fell back out of sight, as if hesitating whether to advance or retreat. The nature of the ground was such that neither party could see the extent of the other's strength; and Beni had been careful to turn this circumstance to the best advantage. In the mean while his men had re-loaded, and were waiting in the same order as before.

They had not to wait long. In another second there arose a shout of "Viva il Rè!" and the royalists, cheered on by their officers, came back with fixed bayonets, at the pas de charge—a narrow, compact, resolute torrent, which looked as if it must carry all before it.

Again the Tuscans delivered their deliberate and deadly fire—again, again, and again; and at each discharge the foremost Neapolitans went down like grass before the scythe. There seemed to be a charmed line drawn across the road, beyond which they could not pass. As fast as they reached it, they fell; as fast as they fell those behind rushed up, and were shot down in their turn.

And all this time the tirailleurs on the cliff-side dropped their unerring bullets into the advancing column, bringing down the hindmost men, and picking off each officer as he came into sight.

Mowed down by an irresistible fire, little guessing by what a mere handful of men they were being held in check, and left almost without an officer to command them, the Neapolitans all at once desisted from the attack and retreated as rapidly as they had charged, dragging off some six or eight of their wounded, and leaving a rampart of their dead piled up half way between themselves and their opponents.

"Viva Garibaldi!" cried Saxon, swinging himself lightly from bush to bush, and leaping down into the road.

"Viva Garibaldi!" shouted Beni's troop, eager to pursue, but held back by their young leader, who knew that they would have no chance if once they betrayed the insignificance of their numbers. Throwing himself before them, he forbade a man to stir. At the same time the tramp of the enemy, broken, hurried and disordered, died rapidly away, and the Garibaldians, only two of whom were slightly wounded, remained in undisputed possession of their little Thermopylæ.

In high spirits, they presently resumed their march; but they saw no more Neapolitans. When the lane opened presently upon a broad platform overlooking the town, they halted. Above them rose the castle ramparts, apparently deserted. Below them lay the streets and squares of Melazzo, with the open country beyond. A strange silence seemed suddenly to have fallen upon the day. There was no echo of musketry to be heard upon the air—no smoke-wreath visible even in places where the combat had been hottest half an hour before. Save a distant shouting here and there, and an occasional shell thrown from some part of the fortifications far away to the westward side of the castle, the tumult of battle seemed to have passed magically away.

"What does it all mean?" said Saxon, breathlessly.

"Well," replied Beni, "I suppose it means that the battle is over."

At that moment a detachment of Malenchini's brigade made its appearance at the further side of the platform, shouting, "Viva l'Italia!" and planted the tricolor on the highest point of the parapet overlooking the town.

The battle was indeed over; the long day's fight, fought gallantly out, was crowned with victory. The whole of the town, up to the very gates of the castle, was in the hands of the liberators.

CHAPTER LXVI. SAXON PURSUES HIS SEARCH.

The battle over, orders were issued for the construction of barricades in all the approaches to the castle. Weary as they were after their long day's fighting, the Garibaldians then stacked their muskets and went to work with a will. Pavements were hastily torn up, carts dragged from the sheds in which their owners had left them, and doors taken from their hinges. Before sundown, a chain of extempore defences was thrown up at every point of danger, and the royalists were effectually imprisoned in their own stronghold.

Then, guarded only by a few sentinels posted upon the barricades, the army dispersed itself about the streets and piazzas, and lay down to rest by hundreds in the churches, the deserted houses, and even the open doorways along the streets.

In the mean while, Saxon went about from barricade to barricade, seeking his friend and questioning every one he met, but seeking and questioning in vain. One Garibaldian remembered to have seen him with the Pavia company during a sharp skirmish up in some gardens near the castle. Another thought he had observed him down on the Marina. A third was certain that he had been killed by the bursting of a shell; while a fourth no less positively asserted that he was with Peard's company in the windmill above the castle. Confused by these contradictory statements, Saxon wandered hither and thither till the twilight came on; and then, utterly exhausted, stretched

himself upon a bench in the market-place and fell profoundly asleep.

His sleep lasted only a couple of hours. He had lain down full of anxiety and apprehension, and no sooner had the first torpor of excessive fatigue passed off than he woke, oppressed by a vague uneasiness, and, for the first few moments, unable to remember where he was.

He looked round upon a spacious piazza deep in shadow, and scattered over with groups of sleeping soldiers, and stands of arms.

Melazzo taken; Castletowers missing; perhaps wounded—perhaps dead! He sprang to his feet as these recollections flashed upon him, and half stupified with sleep, prepared to resume his quest. At the first step, he stumbled over the corpse of a Neapolitan grenadier, lying as if asleep, with his white face turned up to the sky. A few paces further on, he met a couple of Garibaldians, preceded by a torch-bearer, bearing away a wounded man upon a shutter.

Learning from these that there were several temporary hospitals in the town, as well as others beyond the gates, he resolved to visit all before pursuing his search in other directions. He then followed them to a church close by, the stone floor of which had been laid down with straw for the reception of the wounded. The torches planted here and there against the walls and pillars of the building served only to make visible the intense gloom of the vaulted roof above. All around, more or less dangerously wounded, lay some sixty soldiers; while, gliding noiselessly to and fro, were seen the surgeons and nurses, busy on their work of mercy.

Pausing at the door, he asked the sentry if he knew anything of an English nobleman—Lord Castletowers by name—whom he had reason to fear must be among the wounded.

"An Englishman?" said the sentry. "Si, amico, there was an Englishman brought in about two hours ago."

So Saxon went up the nave of the church, and preferred his inquiry to one of the nurses.

She shook her head.

"Alas!" she replied, "his case was hopeless. He died ten minutes after he was brought in."

"Died?"

"His poor body has not yet been removed. It lies yonder, close under the pulpit."

Half in hope, half in dread, the young man snatched a torch from the nearest sconce, and flew to the spot indicated. The shattered corpse lay placidly enough, with a smile upon its dead lips, and the eyes half closed, as if in sleep; but it was not the corpse of Lord Castletowers.

With a deep-drawn breath of relief, Saxon then turned away, and passing gently along the line of patients, looked at each pale face in turn. Having done this, he inquired his way to the next ambulance, which was established in the ground floor of the Polizia. In order to reach this place, he had to re-cross the piazza. Here he met three or four more torch parties; for the Garibaldians were still anxiously searching for their wounded in all parts of the town.

At the door of the Polizia he accosted the sentry with the same question that he had been asking at every barricade and outpost in the place. Could he give him any information of an English gentleman, Lord Castletowers?

The sentry, who happened to be a Frenchman, lifted his cap with the best-bred air imaginable, and asked, in return, if he had the honour of addressing Monsieur Trefalden.

Saxon replied in the affirmative; but . . .

"Alors, que monsieur se donne la peine d'entrer. Il trouvera son ami, milord Castletowers dans la première salle à gauche."

Scarcely waiting to thank the friendly Gaul for his intelligence, Saxon rushed in, and almost the first face on which his eyes rested was the face of his friend.

He was sitting on the side of a bench that had been serving him for a bed. He had a large cloak thrown over his shoulders, and looked rather pale; but was, nevertheless, tranquilly smoking a cigar, and chatting with his nearest neighbour.

"So, Trefalden," said he, as Saxon burst into the room, "you have found me at last! I knew you would be looking for me all over the place, if you were alive to do it; so I left word at the door that you were to apply within. Excuse my left hand."

"I am so glad, Castletowers!" exclaimed Saxon. "I was never so glad in my life!"

"Gently, my dear fellow—gently! You need not shake one's hand quite so vehemently."

"What is the matter? Where are you hurt?"

"In the right arm—confound it!"

"Very badly?"

"No. That is to say, I am not doomed to amputation; but there's an end, so far as I am concerned, to glory and gunpowder—and that is quite bad enough."

CHAPTER LXVII. IN DURANCE VILE.

THE mystery of the Earl's disappearance was sufficiently simple when it came to be explained. He had been carried over the barricade in the last great rush, and, instead of remaining on the spot like Saxon, to fight it out to the last blow, had dashed on with some twenty others, in pursuit of the first fugitives. Having chased the Neapolitans into a blind alley, taken them prisoners, and deprived them of their arms, the Garibaldians then fell in with the Pavia company, and shared with them some of the hottest work that was done in Melazzo that day.

It was while with this gallant company, and at the moment when he was assisting to plant the tricolor on the top of a summer-house in a long-contested garden, that Lord Castletowers received two shots in the right arm, and was forced to go back to the ambulances in the rear.

His wounds, though severe, were not in the least dangerous; one bullet having lodged in the biceps muscle of the upper arm, and another having fractured the ulna bone of the forearm. Both, however, had been already extracted before Saxon found his way to the Polizia, and the surgeon in attendance assured them that Lord Castletowers would, in time, regain the use of his arm as completely as if no mischance had ever befallen it. In the mean while, to be sure, the results were sufficiently inconvenient. The Earl,s

military career was brought to an abrupt conclusion, and his hope of doing something brilliant—something that even Miss Colonna should be forced to admire—was nipped in the bud. These things were hard to bear, and demanded all the patience that he could summon to his aid.

Their campaign thus unexpectedly ended, the young men would gladly have gone back at once to their little yacht, and set sail in search of "fresh fields and pastures new;" but to that proposition the medico would not listen. So they lingered on in Melazzo day after day, keeping for the most part beyond the walls, and passing the hot and weary hours as best they might.

It was a dull time, though enlivened by the surrender of the garrison. They saw the Neapolitan transports steam into the bay, and witnessed the embarkation of Bosco and his troops.

When this interlude was played out, the Garibaldians began to look towards Messina and speculate eagerly on what might next be done. Then came rumours of a general evacuation of the royalist strongholds; and by-and-by they learned beyond doubt that the tedium of success was not likely to be relieved by any more fighting in the island of Sicily.

Somewhat comforted by this intelligence, and still more comforted by a note which the Earl received from Signor Colonna the fourth day after the battle, the young men submitted to the semi-imprisonment of Melazzo, and saw Garibaldi depart with the main body of his army somewhat less regretfully than they might otherwise have done.

Brief as a military despatch, the Italian's note ran thus:

"Caro Gervase. The victory which has just been won terminates the war in Sicily. Dissension and terror reign in the cabinet at Naples. Months will probably elapse before another blow is struck; and it is possible that even that blow may not be needed. In the mean while give ear to earnest counsel. Sheath thy sword, and pursue thy journey in peace. This in confidence from the friend of thy childhood. G. C."

It was something to receive this assurance from a man like Colonna—a man who knew better than even Garibaldi himself the probabilities and prospects of the war. So the friends made the best of their position, and amused themselves by planning what they would do when they received the medico's order of release.

Norway was now out of the question. By the time they could reach Bergen the season would be nearly past; besides which, the Earl was forbidden to expose his wounded arm to so severe a change of temperature. They therefore proposed to confine their voyage to the basin of the Mediterranean, seeing whatever was practicable, and touching, if possible, at Malta, Alexandria, Smyrna, Athens, Naples, Cadiz, and Lisbon, by the way. To this list, for reasons known only to himself, Saxon added the name of Sidon.

At length Lord Castletowers was pronounced fit for removal, though not yet well enough to dispense with medical care. So Saxon cut the knot of that difficulty by engaging the services of a young Sicilian surgeon; and, thus attended, they once more went on board the Albula, and weighed anchor.

CHAPTER LXVIII. LIFE IN THE EAST.

A LITTLE yacht rides at anchor in the harbour of Alexandria, and two young Franks, one of whom carries his right arm in a sling, are wandering to and fro, drinking deeply of that cup of enchantment—a first day in the East.

These two young Franks roam hither and thither in a state of semi-beatitude, conscious neither of hunger, nor thirst, nor fatigue, nor hardly of the heat, which, though it is but nine o'clock in the morning, is already tremendous.

First of all, having but just stepped ashore, they plunge into the Arab quarter of the town, passing through a labyrinth of foul lanes fenced in on either side by blank, windowless dwellings, that look as if they had all turned their backs to the street; and coming presently to thoroughfares of a better class, where the tall houses seem almost toppling together, and the latticed balconies all but touch; and the sky is narrowed to a mere ribbon of vivid ultra-marine high overhead. Here are beggars at every corner, calling loudly upon Allah and the passer-by, donkey-boys, vagrant dogs, now and then a mounted Arab riding like mad, and scattering the foot passengers before him right and left. Here, too, are shops with open fronts and shadowy backgrounds; some gorgeous with silks and shawls; some rich with carpets; some fragrant with precious gums and spices; some glittering with sabres and daggers of Damascus. In each shop, sitting cross-legged on floor or counter, presides the turbaned salesman, smoking his silver-lidded pipe, and indifferent alike to custom and fate. Now comes a Moorish arch of delicate creamy stone, revealing glimpses of a shady court-yard set round with latticed windows, and enclosing a palm-tree and a fountain. One slender, quivering shaft of sunshine falls direct on the green leaves and sparkling water-drops, and on an earthen water-jar standing by—just such a jar as Morgiana may have filled up with boiling oil in the days of the good Caliph Haroun al Raschid. And now comes a string of splay-footed camels, noiseless and dogged-looking, laden with bundles of brushwood as wide as the street, and led by shiny Nubian slaves, with white loin-cloths and turbans. Avoiding this procession, our two Franks plunge into a dark arcade of shops, lighted from above. This is a bazaar. Here are alleys where they sell nothing but slippers; alleys of jewels; alleys of furs, of tobacco, of silks, of sweetmeats and drugs, of books, of glass and ivory wares, of harness, of sponges, and even of printed Manchester goods, Sheffield cutlery, and French ribbons. Here crowds a motley throng of Europeans and Asiatics; impatient Arabs, with the camel's-hair thread bound upon their brows; stately Moslems, turbaned and slippered; Greeks, in crimson jackets and dingy white kilts; dervishes, in high felt caps; magnificent dragomen, in huge muslin trousers; Armenians, Copts, Sy-

rians, negroes, Jews of all climates, and travellers from every quarter of the globe. The water-carrier, with his jar of sherbet on his head, tinkles his brass drinking-cups in the ears of the passers-by; the tart-seller offers his melon-puffs; and here, just leaving the fruit-shop, where she has doubtless been buying "Syrian apples and Othmanee quinces, peaches of Oman, and Egyptian limes," comes the fair Amine herself, followed by that identical porter who was "a man of sense, and had perused histories."

Wandering on thus in a dream of Arabian Nights, the young men, having fortified themselves with sherbet, presently mount a couple of very thorough-bred, high-spirited donkeys, and set off for the ruins of ancient Alexandria. These ruins lie out beyond the town walls, amid a sandy, dreary, hillocky waste that stretches far away for miles and miles beside the sparkling sea. Here they see Pompey's pillar, and Cleopatra's obelisk, and a wilderness of crumbling masonry clothed in a green and golden mantle of wild marigolds all in flower. Here, where once stood the temple of Serapis with its platform of a hundred steps, the wild sea-bird flits unmolested, the jackals have their lair, and the travellers talk of the glories of the Ptolemys.

At last, fairly tired out, our Franks are fain to strike their colours and go back to the town. Here they put up at an English hotel, where they bathe, dine, and rest till evening; when they again sally forth—this time to call upon the English consul.

CHAPTER LXIX. IN SEARCH OF A COMPANY.

The consul was not at his office when the travellers presented themselves; but his representative, a very magnificent young clerk, resplendent in rings, chains, and a fez, was there instead. They found this official in the act of writing a letter, humming a tune, and smoking a cigar—all of which occupations he continued to pursue with unabated ardour, notwithstanding that Saxon presented himself before his desk.

"I shall be glad to speak to you, if you please," said Saxon, "when you are at leisure."

"No passport business transacted after two o'clock in the day," replied the clerk, without lifting his eyes.

"Mine is not passport business," replied Saxon.

The clerk hummed another bar, and went on writing.

Saxon began to lose patience.

"I wish to make a simple inquiry," said he; "and I will thank you to lay your pen aside for a moment, while I do so."

The peremptory tone produced its effect. The clerk paused, looked up, lifted his eyebrows with an air of nonchalant insolence, and said:

"Why the dooce, then, don't you ask it?"

"I wish to know in what part of this city I shall find the offices of the New Overland Route Railway and Steam-Packet Company."

"What do you mean by the *New* Overland Route?" said the clerk.

"I mean a company so-called—a company which has lately established an office here in Alexandria."

"Never heard of any such company," said the clerk, "nor of any such office."

"Where, then, do you suppose I can obtain this information?"

"Well, I should say—nowhere."

"I think it is my turn to ask what you mean?" said Saxon, haughtily.

"My meaning is simple enough," replied the clerk, taking up his pen. "There is no *New* Overland Company in Alexandria."

"But I know that there *is* a company of that name," exclaimed Saxon.

The clerk shrugged his shoulders.

"Oh, very well," said he. "If you know it, that's enough."

And with this he resumed his triple occupation.

At that moment a little glass door opened at the back of the office, and a bald-headed gentleman came out. He bowed.

"You are inquiring," he said, "for some commercial office, I believe? If you will permit me to offer a suggestion, I would advise your calling upon Mr. Melchisedek. Mr. Melchisedek is our great commercial authority in Alexandria. He knows everything, and he knows everybody. A man of universal information, and very courteous to strangers. You cannot do better than call on Mr. Melchisedek."

"I am sure," said Saxon, "I am very much obliged to you."

"Not at all—not in the least. Mr. Melchisedek—any one will direct you. The viceroy is not better known. Good evening."

So saying, the bald-headed gentleman bowed the travellers to the door, and closed it behind them.

"Why, Trefalden," said the Earl, when they were once more in the street, "what interest can you possibly take in an Overland Company? It is some obscure undertaking, depend on it."

"It won't be obscure for long," replied Saxon, complacently. "It is a magnificent affair; and if the agents out here are keeping it quiet, they have their own reasons for doing so."

"You seem to know all about it," said Castletowers, with some surprise.

"I know a good deal about it."

"And mean to take shares?"

"I have taken shares already," replied Saxon, "to a large amount."

Whereupon the Earl only looked grave, and said nothing.

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AT THE BAR.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "A CRUISE UPON WHEELS," &c. &c.

CHAPTER XVI. DOWN IN THE WORLD.

ON that same evening, the commencement of which was signalised by that painful scene in the house in Beaumont-street which was narrated in the last chapter, Mr. Julius Lethwaite sat in his new lodgings, smoking his pipe and talking over business-matters with that devoted personage Jonathan Goodrich.

The new rooms formed a striking contrast to the old, and were situated on the third floor of a house in the neighbourhood of Lincoln's Inn. These rooms were small and poorly furnished. Only two or three articles, special favourites with their proprietor, had been retained by him when the St. James's-street rooms were given up; an easy-chair, a small clock that would go, and one or two prints. He had kept a certain number of law books, too, and these, together with the engravings before alluded to, gave the apartment at any rate a humanised look, and prevented it from being utterly bare and desolate in appearance. A small door led into a bedroom, which adjoined the sitting-room; and these two apartments formed the modest residence of Mr. Julius Lethwaite.

There were tea-things on the table, and there was a tin kettle on the fire, at which Mr. Goodrich was in the act of toasting that delicious engine of destruction, a muffin.

"I bought it myself," said Mr. Lethwaite, laying aside his pipe as a preliminary step to be taken before it was possible to engage in the meal before him. "I mean to live upon them. They are very cheap, and exceedingly satisfying."

"Ah, sir! Don't you talk like that, even in joke," said poor Goodrich, as he turned the deadly morsel.

"But it's not a joke, Jonathan. I always wanted to live upon muffins when I was a boy, but parents and guardians, schoolmasters, and other oppressors, wouldn't stand it. Now there's nobody to stop me, thank goodness, so I'll try the experiment."

"Ah, sir, you'd soon have to drop *that*," said the old clerk, who had not the power of taking in a pleasantry. "No digestion could stand a diet of muffins. Even one now and then's a trial."

"You're an authority on matters of health, I know, Jonathan."

"Yes, sir. I generally have an eye to matters of that sort in my diet, and as to physicking, I do something in that way too, now and then. But I never take a drop or a grain of any sort or kind except on Saturdays, because it might otherwise interfere with business."

"But you couldn't stick to that, you know, if you had a serious illness," said Lethwaite, willing to draw the old fellow out.

"Well, sir, I believe that was how I fell into that illness which I had when you were so good to me. It was a bad illness that," said the old man, in a retrospective tone, "and it began to threaten me on a Monday, and on the Tuesday I had to go to the doctor on my way into business. 'Now, instead of going into business,' he says, 'you just go straight home and get into bed, and put on half a dozen leeches, and get this prescription made up, and take the mixture directly, as indicated.' That's what he said, quite energetic. 'I thank you kindly, sir,' I said in answer, 'but I never do anything in the way of physicking and that except on Saturdays, lest it should interfere with business.' He seemed quite aghast at that. 'Why, man,' he said, almost irritably, 'you are suffering from the premonitory symptoms of inflammation of the lungs; and if you put off the legitimate treatment you may kill yourself, while, if you have recourse to it at once, you may avert the inflammation, and get well again in no time.' 'Thank you kindly, sir,' was my answer, 'but not till Saturday. I never *have* taken medicine except on Saturday, and please goodness I never *will*.' 'Very well,' says he; 'I've done my duty, at any rate, and I wash my hands of it.' Ah well, I fought on and fought on for a day or two longer, but I was forced to give in at last, and by the Thursday night I was in a fever, and out of my mind, as nobody knows better than you, sir."

"Yes, and wanting to go down to the office in your raving fit, and crying out that it would all go wrong unless you did. And now you see, you old goose, it's all gone wrong in spite of your being there every day of your life. So you see you've been no good after all."

"Not much, I'm afraid, sir," said the poor old fellow.

"But seriously, Jonathan. Is it all up with us?"

"I'm afraid, sir, it's no use our attempting to go on—but oh, sir, where are all your watch-making things? You've never been and parted with them?" He spoke as one would to a child of its playthings.

"Yes, Jonathan, I have. The fact is, they were worth money, and I never should have made anything of it."

"Oh dear, oh dear! What a dreadful business it is. And your drums?"

"My drums I've got still, only they're not set up yet. My drums are different, Jonathan; I'm going to get a living out of them."

"Get a living out of *them*—only to think!"

"Yes, to be sure, I shall play on them in an orchestra. At a theatre, you know. You've been at a theatre?"

"Oh yes, years ago, though, and I remember thinking that the drums made such a noise that they spoilt it all. You couldn't hear the rest of the music for them."

"Ah, the man who played had not sufficient self-control, probably. You shall come and hear me perform one of these nights."

"No sir, no, I thank you," said the old man, sadly. "I shouldn't like to do that at all. The head partner in Lethwaite and Gamlin—no, no. But what am I talking about? Lethwaite and Gamlin won't be in existence soon. Ah dear me, ah dear me." Jonathan leant his head forward and covered his face with his hands.

"Come, Jonathan, old man, this won't do, you know," cried his employer, in a cheery tone. "Why, it's you that ought to be keeping my courage up, not I keeping up yours." Our light-hearted friend was really more sorry for old Goodrich than he was for himself.

"Yes, sir, yes, that's true enough, that's quite true; but oh, sir, to think of your watch-making things being parted with, that's upset me more than all the rest. And then to hear you talk about drumming in an orchestra, and living on muffins—the head partner in Lethwaite and Gamlin blowing himself out with muffins—oh, sir, it's too much, it's too much."

"But I wasn't in earnest, you know that well enough, Jonathan. You can't take a joke."

"Oh yes I can, sir, but this is no joke—no joke at all. These rooms ain't like rooms belonging to you, sir—no drums, and no watch-making things; and then where's—where's the picturs?"

"Well, you needn't ask."

"What, they gone too? Why, there was one of the red house at Roehampton where your revered father used to live, and where you yourself was brought up, sir."

"Oh, I've kept that back, Jonathan."

"Ah well, I'm glad to hear that, at any rate. An uncommon pretty pictur that was. But law, sir, this is but a poor place. These chairs are only covered with cotton damask, and they're so hard and stiff that you'd think they didn't want you to sit down upon them; and here's this table, it's only veneered, and not firm either, as these claw-tables seldom are. And that's your bedroom, is it?" continued the old man, who was going, candle in hand, round the rooms. "Ah dear, what a change. Oh dear, oh dear, no curtains, and an iron bedstead that rattles like a bunch of keys, the legs of the chairs all different lengths, and no wardrobe for all your clothes and things. And as to this chest of drawers," continued the old man, approaching one of which all the drawers were more or less open, "I can see by the look of it that it will go nigh to break your heart before you've done with it. Yes, I thought as much," he went on, after trying some of the drawers and finding that they would neither open nor shut—"I thought as much. Those drawers alone are enough to drive you mad, sir, you that are used to have things so different."

"The chest of drawers *is* a trial, Jonathan, I confess," said Lethwaite, "and the language into which I have been betrayed already in connexion with it, would frighten you."

"It's damp weather just now, sir. Perhaps they won't stick so much when it's dry."

And so they went round the rooms, the old clerk shaking everything, and poking at everything, and disparaging everything, as utterly unfit for the use of the head partner in Lethwaite and Gamlin's.

"There's neither head partner nor tail partner now," said Mr. Lethwaite, in reply. "You forget that, Jonathan."

"No, I don't forget anything about it, sir; but I do think that you've been a little bit premature in selling off and parting with all your things, and getting rid of your rooms in St. James's-street, and coming down in the world like this. There was no need for such a sudden pull up, I do assure you. You've no idea, sir, how ready every one would have been to help you—in the City, I mean."

"Better as it is, Jonathan, depend on it. It would be all very well at first; but I know human nature, and when they found that there was no money forthcoming, they would begin to look disagreeable at us."

"You're mistaken, sir; you are, indeed," urged the old man, eagerly. "There are 'ouses, and first-rate 'ouses, too, that would stand by you well, if it was only for your late father's sake, and the respect they bore him. Ah, sir, you don't know the City."

"I know human nature."

"Well, sir, I wouldn't be too sure of that, if you'll excuse me for saying so. You know one side of human nature—the selfish side; but there's another, and one better worth studying, and that's the generous side. Ah, sir, they'd trust your father's son in the City."

"Yes; and then, when my father's son, as you call him, couldn't pay, what would they say? No, no—my father's son will pay everything off as far as his money will go, and then he'll go and drum in an orchestra, and get more. And he'll think there's nothing derogatory to his father's name in earning an honest penny in that way or any other, provided it *is* honest."

The old man shook his head, and turned up his eyes in horror. He was quite unable to get over

the drumming part of the business. It stuck in his throat as the muffins did—figuratively.

"Oh, you obstinate old villain!" continued Lethwaite, breaking out as usual into the language of affectionate vituperation. "I declare that, if I didn't feel convinced that it would be no use, and that you wouldn't go, I'd turn you out of my employment this very day. By-the-by, though, now I think of it, you *must* go. There will be no office for you to attend soon; I'm so glad! and you'll be obliged to accept some comfortable appointment somewhere else."

"Not if I can help it, sir. I've saved a little money—thanks to your liberality and that of your revered father; and as long as that will last I shall wait."

"Wait, and for what, you old—aggravator?"

"Wait for you, sir, in case you want me. There's no telling, sir," he continued, anxious to prevent "Mr. Julius" from getting in a word edgeways. "There's no telling; something may come of those American securities yet."

"You hear this man," interrupted Lethwaite, calmly, and addressing an imaginary jury of mad doctors, or Lunacy Commissioners. "You hear this man, and allow him to be at large."

"Ah, it's all very well, sir; but something *may* come of them, and all that cotton that's ware'oused at Augusta may be got at yet; and then we might go on again still; yes, and then (for all he's an old goose, and an old aggravator, which I won't deny), you may want the services of Jonathan Goodrich yet; and then where should I be, if I'd got some other occupation and couldn't come? Why, it would go near to break my heart—that it would."

"Ah, Jonathan, you're building castles in the air to an extent which, at your time of life, is disgraceful. I'll tell you what, if ever what you have said should come about the firm shall have a new name in it, and shall be Lethwaite and Goodrich instead of Lethwaite and Gamlin."

There is no need to give the good old man's reply. The conversation, which turned upon business-matters, was soon after interrupted by the arrival of Gilbert Penmore. He was passing from one newspaper office to another, and, his friend's new lodgings being all in the way, had come in to make a proposal which he and Gabrielle had concocted between them.

"I've just snatched a moment," said Gilbert, "in passing, to come in and have a look at your new lodgings. Well, I don't know, I'm sure," he continued, looking about him. "They're rather dingy, aren't they? Perhaps it's the comparison which they suggest with the old. What do *you* say, Mr. Goodrich?"

"Well, sir, I've just been expressing to Mr. Lethwaite my opinion that he's gone to work too suddenly, and come down too rapidly. It's a sad pokey place, sir; and there's a chest of drawers——"

"Oh, never mind the chest of drawers," said Lethwaite, laughing. "I can give them up altogether, if the worst comes to the worst, and live out of my portmanteau."

"The fact is," said Gilbert, "I've rather an interested motive in disparaging these rooms, because I want you to come and take ours."

"Yours? Why, they're taken already. Hasn't Miss Carrington——?"

"Miss Carrington is going to leave. We have had rather an unpleasant scene with her, and it was agreed that we had better part."

"And when does she go?"

"To-morrow."

"Oh, I'll come, of course. I shall be only too delighted. Jonathan, any day after to-morrow you'll find me at Mr. Penmore's. You know where?"

"I don't know whether we can be ready so soon as that," said Gilbert; "but, if not, you shall hear. It's very kind of you, though, to be ready to fill up our vacancy so quickly."

"So far from that, it is one of the profoundest pieces of selfishness which could be conceived. I shall be in clean and comfortable quarters. I shall be incomparably better looked after than I am here, and I shall have the society I like without going across the threshold for it. Oh, don't imagine that you've caught me at a good action, whatever you do."

"I've caught you at a good many before now."

"Never—nor anybody else. I get more confirmed in my opinions as to the depravity of human motive every day I live. There's only this old file," he continued, pointing to Mr. Goodrich, "whom I can't make out. I can't conceive why he doesn't throw me overboard, and secure some better berth while he can."

The old man shook his head, and said smiling: "You're always at your jokes, Mr. Julius."

CHAPTER XVII. A FATAL MISTAKE.

THE evening which followed that painful scene previously narrated, when the feeling, so long pent up in Gabrielle Penmore's breast, at length found vent, was one of those which Gilbert was compelled to pass away from home.

Poor Gabrielle then was left alone, and with plenty of leisure to reflect upon the miserable circumstances which had just taken place. She was not sparing in self-reproach, though, Heaven knows, there was small enough ground for it. What provocation had she not received? How long and how patiently had she endured before her brief anger was allowed to have its way! But there are consciences and consciences, and a very small load will weigh more, on some minds, than a very great one will do on others. There are some whose consciences will not allow them to look over the hedge, and some who may steal the horse, and yet feel quite comfortable, only an anxiety as to whether they will be found out or not.

Gabrielle fell to brooding over this matter. Had her husband been present, it would have been otherwise, but there was no one to comfort her, and tell her how justifiable her irritation had been. A judicious friend would have been invaluable; but Gabrielle had at this time few friends. The fact that both she and her husband had been brought up and had lived among those far-distant islands during the time when friend-

ships are mainly contracted, was one reason of this, while another was to be found in their poverty. Since the time of their marriage they had been so continually engaged in the struggle necessary to make both ends meet, that they had had little leisure for forming acquaintances, which could also only be kept up by means of an increased expenditure. An English governess, who had lived with the Descartes family for many years, and who was now settled in London, was almost the only friend whom Gabrielle possessed.

So, being alone that evening, poor Mrs. Penmore brooded over her troubles, and made them out in consequence much worse than they were. Miss Carrington was her guest, she reflected, and, as such, had the greatest of claims on her forbearance. Then, she had lately appeared to be in very indifferent health, and that might very well be partly the reason of her being cross-grained and unkind. Then, Gabrielle thought of the advances which this lady had made to Gilbert, and this, certainly, could not be accounted for, or excused by, illness, or aught else; but then came another consideration—might not she herself have been mistaken about these same advances, and might she not have attributed to Miss Carrington feelings which had never entered that lady's head? She was Gilbert's cousin, and did not that justify her in adopting a somewhat affectionate tone?

And now this gentle soul began to think to herself how much she should like to be reconciled to her enemy, and to speak to her some few words of a more kindly sort than those which they had last exchanged. And yet what a difficult thing this would be to manage! They had parted in anger. Such words had passed between them as would make their next meeting a very awkward one, to say the least. Indeed, she had no reason to believe that Miss Carrington would consent to another meeting. How could it be arranged? Should she send up and ask whether Miss Carrington would receive her? The probable answer would be that she was too much indisposed to do so.

Mrs. Penmore pondered for a long time over all sorts of different schemes of reconciliation, rejecting one after another. At last she hit upon one that found favour in her eyes.

It has been mentioned, in a former chapter, that it was always Miss Carrington's custom to partake of some refreshment—something in the shape of supper—the last thing at night. Sometimes it would be a basin of broth, sometimes cold meat, or sometimes only bread and cheese and porter. This last was never omitted, as it had been medically rescribed for her.

This meal was always taken up-stairs by the faithful Miss Cantanker, and at nine o'clock every night she was to be encountered on the stairs bearing the tray, and in a state of great importance. It was in connexion with this ceremonial that an idea entered the mind of Mrs. Penmore on which she determined to act without delay. She rose from her chair, and, opening the door of the room in which she had been sitting, passed out into the little passage.

Ah, Gabrielle Penmore, go back! Abstain from that which you are about to do. Cast from you, as you would a dangerous reptile, that thought which has come into your mind. Act not upon it! Go back and shut the door of the room upon yourself, and sit there quietly till your husband comes; for know, that if you go on with that which you are about to do, the consequences will involve both you and him in misery such as you have, neither of you, known before.

But Gabrielle went on her way without misgiving or fear. She descended the stairs, and arrived before the kitchen door, paused for a moment; for she was, as many young housekeepers are, rather afraid of the kitchen. Then she tapped gently at the door, and went in.

Miss Cantanker, with a very red face, was standing over the fire preparing some eggs, while the wretched Charlotte, with her mouth wide open, as it always was when in the presence of her tormentor, stood by holding the light, and, indeed, everything else that was likely to be wanted for the culinary process in which the Cantankerous one was engaged.

Cantanker turned hastily round when Mrs. Penmore entered, and Charlotte dropped the extinguisher, the snuffers, and a buttery knife with a crash like a salute.

"You are preparing Miss Carrington's supper, are you not?" asked Gabrielle, addressing the heated lady. Miss Cantanker had Charlotte to reprove before she could trouble herself about Charlotte's mistress.

"You stupid, gawky owl," she said, "dropping things about like that—how dare you?—Yes, Mrs. Pingmore, I ham," she added, after a pause, and going on with what she was about.

"It has quite a good smell," remarked Gabrielle, anxious to be agreeable. To this observation, however, she received no reply.

There *was* a good smell, no doubt. Jane Cantanker was an artist. She had about her everything she was likely to want. The pieces of toast on which the eggs were to repose stood crisp and ready, and the eggs themselves showed a golden tint through their whiteness which was irresistible.

"I want to ask a great favour," said Mrs. Penmore, hesitatingly. "It is that I may be allowed to take Miss Carrington's supper up-stairs."

If Gabrielle had offered to take Miss Cantanker up-stairs in her arms, that worthy lady could hardly have been more wildly astonished. She stood with the frying-pan in one hand, and the kitchen spoon in the other, staring at Mrs. Penmore with a stony gaze, as if for the time she really could not get the nature of her request into her head. As to making any reply, it appeared as if nothing could be further from her thoughts.

"Well, what do you say?" asked Gabrielle again, after this silence had lasted some time.

"'Say,'" repeated the handmaiden. "Why, I hardly know what *to* say. You must be out of your mind, Mrs. Pingmore." And she stared harder than ever.

"But surely there is nothing so very extra-

ordinary in my request," replied Gabrielle, smiling. "I want to say something to Miss Carrington, and to wish her good night—and—and this would be a good opportunity."

"'Say something,' yes, I should think you did, after what passed at dinner-time."

Gabrielle turned crimson at this rough allusion; but she was prepared for disagreeables, and stuck to her point.

"Well," she said, "what do you say? Will you let me have the tray?"

Cantanker again took time to consider this outrageous proposition before she replied.

"I've taken up my mistress's meals ever since she was old enough to want meals at all; and it's my place, and I can't, for the life of me, see what business—if you'll excuse *me*, Mrs. Pingmore—it can possibly be of yours. I have no wish to let others than myself attend upon my mistress, and more especially *when* those others is not well disposed towards her, as is certain in the present case, after what has occurred this very day."

This, one would naturally have concluded, was likely to be final, the more especially as Cantanker was concluding her preparations, and getting everything ready for her ascent to her mistress's bedroom. But Gabrielle was in earnest, and was not to be put off so easily.

"But I just told you," she urged, smiling in the most bewitching manner she could, "that it is *because* of what occurred to-day that I want you to let me have my way in this. I don't want to supersede you in your legitimate office. You can come up afterwards and see that Miss Carrington is comfortable for the night. But what I do want is, to have this opportunity of paying Miss Carrington a little attention, and of telling her that I bear no malice, after what has occurred to-day."

"'Bear no malice,'" retorted this crabbed woman, not willing to lose an opportunity of carping; "no, I should think not. It's them that are injured and insulted that has the right to bear malice, or to let it stand over."

Mrs. Penmore allowed this amiable speech to pass unnoticed, but she felt it, nevertheless, keenly.

"And how do you know, or how do *I* know," continued Cantanker, "that my mistress would wish to see you, or be attended by you?"

"Yes, but the only way to find that out is to try," said Gabrielle, with another smile.

Importunity and perseverance, and the great system of refusing to take "No" for an answer, were doing their work as usual, and Gabrielle began to think that she saw symptoms of a tendency to relent in her grim antagonist.

"I am sure you will not continue to refuse me what I wish so much?" she said.

"It's my place," reiterated the handmaiden, taking up her former position, but more faintly than before, "and I cannot, for the very life of me, think why I should be asked to go out of my place, at this time of day, for a fancy." And this amiable woman looked exceedingly resolute and exceedingly indisposed to yield the point.

"Yes, I know it is a fancy," replied Gabrielle, "and I know it is your place to take up Miss Carrington's supper, and that you like to do so, and that she likes you to do so," added the flatterer; "but I thought that just for once——"

"It's the strangest thing I ever heered of in *my* life," said the icy one, perhaps half a degree thawed by Mrs. Penmore's little compliment. She was standing with the tray, which was now prepared, in both her hands, and staring as before.

"Come," said Gabrielle, and she took the tray in her hands, and smiled as they both held it. It looked a very inviting tray, with a snowy napkin spread over it, the eggs hidden under their bright metal cover, the symmetrical piece of bread by the side, and, lastly, the stout foaming in its jug.

"Come," said Mrs. Penmore, "you must let me have the privilege for once."

Cantanker still looked very sulky.

"Well, I wash my hands of it," she said. "If my mistress is angry, *I'm* not to blame."

But Gabrielle had got the tray, and lost no time in making off with it.

"I never heered of such a thing in my life," said Cantanker, again looking after her viciously; and she went on muttering, with a sound like distant thunder, and so she remained standing in the stone corridor outside the kitchen.

Charlotte held a candle at the foot of the kitchen stairs to light her mistress. After that there was the lamp in the passage.

By the time that Gabrielle had reached the first floor, she was so out of breath, between the stairs and her agitation at the thought of what she was doing, that she was obliged to go into the drawing-room, tray and all, to recover herself a little. After that she proceeded on her mission. She paused again when she had reached Miss Carrington's landing, and, putting the tray down on the floor, knocked for admittance.

A rather faint voice bade her "come in," and she entered.

The room was dimly lighted. Miss Carrington was seated before the fire in an easy-chair, with her back to the door.

"You are later than usual, Cantanker, aren't you?" she said, in a languid voice, and without looking round.

Gabrielle felt the awkwardness of the situation very keenly. Her last parting with Miss Carrington, and that but a few hours before, had been certainly in anger. That parting was to be final, and the next day this most unmanageable lady was to leave the house. No doubt this present meeting must be an awkward one.

"I'm afraid you will be disappointed," Gabrielle began. At the sound of her voice, Miss Carrington started, and turned swiftly round.

"Where is Jane?" she said. "Is anything the matter?"

"Nothing whatever. I asked for leave to bring you your supper to-night, and obtained it with great difficulty."

Miss Carrington appeared much bewildered

at first, like one newly aroused from sleep. She remained silent, and watched all the movements of Gabrielle, as she spread the supper-things on the table. At length she seemed to realise what was going on, and perhaps to remember that last stormy interview.

"May I ask," she said at last, "to what I must attribute all this attention, and why you have taken upon you this menial office?"

"Well, I wanted an opportunity of coming up to speak to you," said Gabrielle, "and I thought this would be a good one. The last time we met our parting was a very distressing one, and I cannot bear to think of it."

"Then why should you want to break it all up again by speaking of it?" said Miss Carrington, rather peevishly.

"I only wanted to say that I am sorry that any unpleasant words should have passed between us. I didn't like to go to bed without saying good night."

Miss Carrington made no answer. She was engaged now with the supper-tray, but she seemed rather to be playing with the food than eating it. She swallowed a few mouthfuls, and then pushed the plate away; but she drank the beer eagerly, and with a sort of feverish thirst. "What horrid stuff!" she said, as she finished it. Then she seemed to remember what Gabrielle had said.

"You must not imagine," she answered at last, "that I am going to give up my intention of leaving. If you have come with the idea of persuading me to remain, you have troubled yourself uselessly."

"Oh no, I never thought of such a thing for a moment," was the answer to this somewhat ungracious speech.

"I shall certainly leave to-morrow," continued Miss Carrington. "After what has happened, I should not think of remaining longer."

"Yes, but you won't go away in anger? It is better, no doubt, that we should part, but we may part without being enemies."

Miss Carrington did not answer for the moment. She rang the bell, which was responded to in due time by the fair Cantanker.

"You may take these things down, Jane," said her mistress.

"Why, if you haven't been and left them beautiful eggs almost untouched!" said the maiden. "It's positively a sin and a shame."

"I've no appetite this evening," answered the lady. "By-the-by, Jane, where did you get that beer?—it's the nastiest I ever tasted."

"Well, miss, I tried a new public round the corner. The tap at Mr. Giles's where we have dealt previous was not a good one, so I thought I would try the other."

"Ah, well, it's worse than the first; but it doesn't matter—it's the last we shall want."

Cantanker retired with the tray, staring, as usual, at Gabrielle, and seeming to wonder very much what she was still doing in her mistress's apartment.

She did not stay there much longer.

"I won't keep you from your rest now," she said. "You look tired."

"I am very tired to-night."

"Good night, then," said Gabrielle, holding out her hand cordially. "Good night, and good-bye!"

Miss Carrington took the proffered hand. She seemed half asleep already. "Good night," she said. "Time enough for good-bye to-morrow!"

And so they parted.

Gabrielle went down stairs more satisfied than she had gone up. She had done what she could. She and her guest were not enemies, at any rate. Still, she felt oppressed and melancholy. What were they to do? Miss Carrington gone, they would be in the same straits to which they were reduced before her arrival. If what had happened that day might have been averted, things might have gone on tolerably at any rate, and they might have kept their heads above water till Gilbert got that chance which must surely come at last.

Gabrielle was determined to sit up for her husband. She was indeed in no humour for rest. A great anxiety for the future had taken possession of her. She tried to look onward and peer into that future which is so mercifully hidden from our gaze. Could she fancy a very different state of things? Could she see her husband and herself in a comfortable home with an assured income—in a word, prosperous and secure? Of course she could not. Can any one, when the immediate prospect is dark, and the way to something more brilliant is not discernible, believe that that way is still there, though invisible at present? When the dark side of the cloud is turned towards us, can we realise fully the silver lining? Lastly, can any one take a cheerful view of anything when sitting up for somebody in a lonely house?

At last, Penmore's key was heard turning in the lock of the street door, and at that sound the little woman's spirit woke up again. Help, protection, comfort, seemed to be at hand. It was a cheerful sound that, somehow. The hand that turned that key was full of strength and energy. That hand belonged to her, as did the man who owned it. And he had come back to help her and take care of her, and the house was lonely no longer.

"Why, how cold you are, and pale like a little ghost! And what business have you to be up at this time of night?" said Gilbert, as his wife came out into the passage to receive him.

"Oh, I couldn't go to bed," she answered, "till you came. I have been so nervous and miserable." And then she told him of all that had happened since he left—how she had repented of having let her anger get the better of her, how she had sought a reconciliation with Miss Carrington, and how it had all ended.

"Why, you little goose," he said, as he drew her towards him, "you have just reversed the right order of things. It was you who were injured and insulted, and it was Miss Carrington

who ought to have made peace overtures to you, not you to her. I'm quite ashamed of you."

And Gabrielle felt happy now, and was soon at rest, and all the house was quiet and still.

TO VENEZUELA.

SAILING ON A FRIDAY.

"NEEDLES indeed! they look more like Grinders; and, à propos of that, if this confounded wind continues dead in our teeth, we shall pitch bows under as soon as we get outside." I uttered these words without addressing myself to any one in particular, for I knew no one on board, and, in fact, there was no one near enough to hear me but my servant, who, like myself, was leaning over the taffrail, watching the pilot drop astern. I looked at my watch; it was seven minutes past seven, on the 17th of June (I like seven, it is a lucky number); we were off the Needles; the pilot had just left us; there was a strong breeze right ahead, and the weather did not look altogether so propitious as it should do on a midsummer evening. My servant, Juan, was a fine specimen of a Santa Cruz man. He stood six feet five inches in his boots, was an excellent valet, never drank, smoked, nor swore, spoke Spanish and English, loved England with all his heart, and, like most natives of Santa Cruz and Saint Thomas, fully considered himself an Englishman. I knew little of Juan, who had been in my service only a few days, and was now to learn one of his peculiarities. He was subject to an extraordinary flow of spirits on the occurrence of anything which others regarded as depressing. A simple contretemps put him in a good humour; but a disaster made him jocular, and the graver the case the more he was elated. On hearing my exclamation he turned round approvingly, and said, "Yes, no fears, sir, but we'll have a rough night of it; I never hur-red no good of sailing on a Friday." "Pooh, pooh, Juan," said I, "that's a mere prejudice. Why, on Friday, the 9th of August, 1492, no less a man than Cristóval Colon sailed from Lagos to discover the New World, these very West Indies to which we are now going, and on Friday, the 12th of October, he did discover San Salvador, not so very far from where you were born; and on Friday, the 1st of March, 1493, he saw land on his return—that is, he ought to have seen it if the weather had not been rather thick." I said the last words with some hesitation, for, in fact, I recollected that Colon, on his homeward voyage, encountered a regular tormenta off Portugal, and was near foundering; so that the third Friday was rather against me. Juan, however, as became a man of his inches, was not to be beaten from his opinion, and said: "I don't know nothing about Columbus, sir, but my father, who was a better man, leastways made more voyages 'tween 'Merica and Europe—for he was a ship's steward, and spoke English as well as I do—said he never hur-red no good of sailing on a Friday." So saying, and laying a peculiarly grating emphasis on the word hur-red, Juan stalked off.

"Confound the fellow!" said I to myself, "it's absurd, but he makes me melancholy with his forebodings. Yet, imagine anything like risk in a grand vessel of three thousand tons and upwards! Why, the wretched carvel in which Columbus made his voyages, was hardly so large as the long-boat there. It is no exaggeration to say that she would scarcely have carried the admiral's potted meats, which the steward tells me weigh over twenty tons. It is true, however, that though the voyage from Lagos to Guanahari was three thousand and forty miles—nearly as long as from Southampton to Saint Thomas, which is but one hundred and forty-seven more—yet, as Humboldt says, 'A voyage from the coast of Spain, and thence to South America, is scarcely attended with any event which deserves attention, especially when undertaken in summer. The navigation is often less dangerous than crossing one of the great lakes of Switzerland.' Whereas in our voyage there is that odious Bay of Biscay to be crossed, and a still worse sea on the homeward passage; and steamers, however grand, have risks of their own. Well, who knows! Juan's forebodings may be justified." So, after finishing my reverie, I went to smoke a cigar in the allowable place before the funnel, and next to arrange my cabin, and so, in due course, to bed.

I was awoke in the morning by a hideous jabber of several small voices crying all at once, "Steward! steward! for vy I say call I you many times? Vy you by your own selves not ask me vat I vant?" This reminded me of Trollope's grinning Frenchman and his rotten walnut; and incontinently I laughed somewhat loudly, which had the effect of shaming my neighbours and stilling the clamour. On leaving my cabin I was astonished to see outside the next cabin door four such Lilliputian pairs of half-boots that I could not but come to the conclusion that my neighbours must be all children, and yet their voices were the voices of middle age. Afterwards I discovered that the Spanish Creoles have feet as tiny as those of Chinese ladies, but of a natural tininess, and without deformity.

Travelling per steamer is a trite affair. People think little more of crossing the Atlantic in one of the gigantic vessels of the Royal Mail Steam Packet Company, or of the Cunard line, than of passing a river on a bridge. "The river," says the old Sanscrit proverb, "is crossed, and the bridge is forgotten." Fourteen days, or so, of short whist and long flirtations, of bad cigars and pleasant yarns, of hot calms and cold gales, a transfer of cash and billets, and the voyage is over. But the utility, wealth, and importance of such an association as the Royal Mail Company, the admirable system organised for the performance of the duties of every individual serving under it, and the consequent safety with which so many voyages, at all seasons, are performed, deserve

more consideration than is usually given to the subject. In my first lounging fit I took up the prospectus and the book of regulations of the company, which dates from 1830; and setting myself to calculate, found that this one company now owns a fleet of twenty-three steamers, of forty-five thousand eight hundred and four tons, and eleven thousand four hundred and seventy horse-power. These vessels, I calculated, convey on an average some thirty-five thousand passengers yearly, and over twenty million of dollars in specie, besides other valuable cargo. There are prizes in such a service. The superintendents make from one thousand five hundred to two thousand pounds a year. The senior captain draws one thousand two hundred in cash, and has his living and lodging free. The other captains, with like advantages in other respects, get one thousand per annum. The junior officers are proportionably well paid. There is a home for them at Southampton, where they live at free quarters. In the large steamers there are four or five officers besides the captain, and their duties are strictly defined. The chief officer keeps the log, the second has charge of the treasure, and accompanies the Admiralty's agent on shore with the mails, the third and fourth stow the cargo. A junior officer is never left in charge of the ship at night. There is a goodly crew. On board my ship, which I will call the Nameless, were fifty-three seamen, fifty-four engineers, and twenty-three servants. One might well feel at ease in a vessel so provided.

I soon became acquainted with most of the passengers. There were several naval officers of rank, a handsome admiral with a fine bold nose, a baronet with a romantic name, a captain of the race of England's naval demi-gods, several West Indian planters, and not a few pretty planters' daughters, some, too, without chaperones; a shabby Columbian general, a few lively Frenchmen, and a score of Creole nondescripts. I passed my time in playing chess and learning Spanish. Unfortunately, there were no señoras or señoritas of whom to be taught. There was, however, a young aide-de-camp to the President of Peru, who possessed so much patience and amiability, that he would talk to me in pure Castillano by the hour, though at first I did not comprehend more than one word in a hundred. Nevertheless, by the time we reached the Azores, I had made some progress, and had even once asked publicly at the dinner-table, in Spanish, for the mustard. It was the 23rd of June, at 4 A.M., that we passed the islands, and sighted two of the group. They lie directly in the course out, but homeward, a very great circuit is made to the west. The outward-bound captains like to see the islands, for the currents in the Atlantic are so strong and so various that no reckoning can be perfectly true. There is an equinoctial current from east to west, and there is the Gulf Stream, which is a hot current, from west to east; and there are local currents and abnormal currents, and a great-circuit-current, compounded of all these, which has a periphery of three thousand eight hundred leagues, and a log of wood dropped into the sea opposite Senegal would go, as many other sticks do, "on circuit," and return to its starting-place in two years and ten months.

We passed, I say, the Azores on the 23rd of June, and forthwith the weather waxed hot. We had not yet caught the trade-winds, and, though there were occasional squalls, on the whole it was sultry, with a rather lurid sky at night. On the 25th it was particularly close and oppressive. I had been playing chess all the morning. It was two P.M., and I was lazily talking to my late antagonist, a good-looking Frenchman, who, though he was, he informed me, thirty-five, looked like a mere youth, owing to an entire absence of beard, whiskers, and moustache. Groups of people, some reading, others playing chess or draughts, sat or lounged around us. It was a dead calm, and the polished mirror of the sea gave back the sun's rays with interest. "Monsieur voyage pour son plaisir ou pour les affaires?" I inquired. "Pour mon plaisir?" repeated the Frenchman, with some surprise, "du tout, du tout, monsieur. Je suis médecin, monsieur, et j'ai aussi une fabrique de bottes à Lima." "Quoi, monsieur," said I, raising myself a little on my elbow, "médecin et marchand de bottes à la fois—vous plaisantez!" The Frenchman opened his lips to reply, but just at that moment there was a tremendously loud crash, followed by a strange whizzing noise, and almost immediately afterwards by a succession of terrific thuds, as if some Cyclops had suddenly commenced hammering in the engine-room. At the same time showers of splinters came flying from the starboard paddle-box, and a dense cloud of steam and smoke burst all along the deck, so as almost to hide the funnel from sight. Great confusion of course ensued. Chess-tables and chairs were overset; screams of ladies, questions of men shouted in various languages, rushes of sailors amid the cloud of steam, oaths and scuffling, added to the din. It was curious to see in that moment of terrible uncertainty, when an explosion, or some other catastrophe was expected by all, how some of the foreigners who had been sneering at religion all the way out, suddenly betook themselves to prayer. For myself, I felt exactly as I did some years ago in a railway accident. In both cases I expected every moment to be killed, and yet the most trivial circumstances did not escape me, while my general thought was, as I looked at the bright sun and quiet sleep of Nature, that a violent death was all the more shocking with everything around so quiet and peaceable.

Half a minute, perhaps, had passed, but it seemed a long time, and I was rushing forward to see what really had happened, when I felt myself stopped by a powerful arm, and the huge figure of Juan blocked the way. "Best stop here," he said, with a grin; "I have got finely scalded myself, without being of no use. Now the engines

are stopped, the captain will soon put matters to rights, if any one can; but, Caramba! this all comes of sailing on a Friday. I never hur-red of no good from sailing on a Friday." Destiny, however, was for this time to let us off with only a fright. The thundering blows ceased with the stoppage of the engines, the steam and smoke gradually cleared away, and the hubbub abated. It was then we learned that the great shaft which connects the paddle-wheels with the machinery had suddenly snapped, and, starting up like a snag, had caught some ponderous gear, which it whirled round with each revolution of the engines, smashing the paddle-box and everything near it. In the confusion there had been an upset of hot coals and an escape of steam, which scalded several men, and drove the others out of the engine-room.

The danger of the late accident was soon forgotten, and some of those who had been most alarmed were unmercifully quizzed. About one short fat Creole in particular the jokes were never ending. He was in his cabin when the crash took place, and fancying from the smoke and steam which entered his quarters that the ship was on fire, he actually contrived to thrust his corpulent body through the round window, though one would have thought it too small for the passage of a fat rabbit. From the window he somehow scrambled on deck, and made his appearance, steaming with perspiration, with one sleeve of his coat torn off, and with a face and figure, as every one declared, considerably elongated by his squeeze through the bull's-eye.

How the damages were repaired I know not, but, in a few hours, we were going on much as usual; so much so, indeed, that the Frenchman, who had told me he was doctor and bootmaker at once, could now finish his story and explain himself. "When I commenced my career," said he, "I found that no one would trust me to prescribe, on account of my juvenile appearance. In despair, I consulted a friend, who said to me, 'My dear fellow, with that child's face of yours, you will never have a patient. But stay! I know a certain college in which a Greek professor is wanted. You shall be the Greek professor; you shall have the place!' In vain I protested that I knew nothing of Greek. 'I make it entirely my business,' replied my friend; 'you shall have the place.' Accordingly, I found myself at the college, with a letter of introduction to the lecturer, who had been temporarily discharging the duties of the defunct professor of Greek. I had counted on several days to prepare myself, but on handing him the letter, he said, in a sharp voice, 'Charmed to see you, and to resign my functions. The students will be ready for you in ten minutes. I will send a man to show you the lecture-room.' At that moment I felt my knees tremble under me, and my uneasiness was so great, that I almost resolved to jump into an omnibus I saw pass, drive to the station, and return to Paris. Somehow, I found myself at the lecture-room, and just then a lucky thought occurred to me. 'Range yourselves,' I said to the students, 'as you ranked at the last examination. Now,' I continued, when they had done so, 'let the lowest read first.' When he had finished, I said to the next, 'What mistakes has he made, and how do you correct them?' He mentioned one or two blunders, and I then put the same question to others, till no one had anything left to say. The reading and the corrections occupied a long time, at the end of which I said, 'That will do for the first lecture; at the next I shall have more to say to you.' In fact, when the next séance came, I had, by great industry, prepared myself a little, and managed to deliver a discourse, and, in the mean time, I had the satisfaction of hearing that my fame was great among the students, who were tickled with the novelty of my system, insomuch that my senior colleague congratulated me on abandoning the career of a physician, and assured me that I was born to be a professor! I longed, however, to return to my original employment, and, as I did not see my way in France, I went out to Lima, where I married a Creole, fell ill of dysentery, and, as I could not recover my health in Peru, I opened a shoe-shop, left my wife in charge of it, and returned to Paris, and I am now going out to bring home my daughter to be educated."

Next day we arrived within the influence of the trade-winds. We had now frequent squalls and thunder and lightning till the 30th, on which day, at seven P.M., we made, as the sailors say, the little island of Sombrero, or "Hat Island." It is only three-quarters of a mile long and nine hundred feet broad; is a perfectly flat rock, about twenty feet above the level of the sea; and derives its name from its fancied resemblance to a cardinal's hat. In 1850 it was uninhabited, except by sea-fowl and black lizards: the only place of landing was at a bight on the west side: and getting on shore was what Yankees would term a caution to snakes. "Under very favourable circumstances," says a nautical writer, "by watching an opportunity, you may jump on to a flat ledge to the cliff, and with some difficulty ascend to the summit." The almighty dollar, however, would make a landing anywhere, and as there was abundance of guano on the rock, the Americans had taken possession of it, and we saw them hard at work with cranes and carts loading vessels with the precious deposit.

At three P.M. on the 1st of July we anchored in the harbour of St. Thomas. I looked in vain for the little steamer which I expected would be ready to convey me to La Guaira. Instead of it I was shown a schooner of about eighty tons, which was to sail next day for that place. Viewed from the decks of the gigantic Nameless, she looked like a cockle-shell. Spite of the heat, I landed at once, and went straight to the store of a young merchant, whose family I knew. He was a handsome fellow of about two-and-twenty, with bright blue eyes and curly hair, and with such an overpowering share of good nature that all his other

qualities seemed absorbed by it. He produced some excellent brandy, and still better cigars, and we began to discuss how I should amuse myself till the schooner was ready to start. Of course I had a list of commissions, all of which it was agreed should be executed at a cooler hour next morning. Then we began to talk about the harbour, and I happened to ask if there were many sharks in it? Hereupon my host brightened up, and said: "If you would like to see a few, I'll show you some. A horse of mine was taken ill last night, and is just dead. We'll tow the carcase off with a boat to the mouth of the harbour, take a couple of rifles and a harpoon, and it's odd if we don't have some sport." No sooner said than done. Orders were at once given to drag the dead horse to the water's edge, and my host, followed by myself and a big negro, who carried the rifles and the harpoon, walked down to the boat. It was a large boat, with four rowers and an awning, and as the boatmen, notwithstanding the heat, pulled with a will, we made way rapidly, and before long had got past the steamers, and were nearing the mouth of the harbour. As yet I had seen nothing, and was becoming rather impatient. "Why," said I, "I don't believe there are any sharks. I have not seen a single back fin above water." In reply, my host checked the rowers for a moment, when, as the surge we made subsided, several dark lines showed themselves just astern of the horse. "Give way," said he to the boatmen; "we have not yet reached the place where we can fire safely, and if we stop another half minute the horse will be torn to ribbons." When the boat had gone a few hundred yards further, he said to me, "Now cock your rifle, and look out! The instant we stop, the sharks will rise, and the first that turns to seize the horse, fire right into his belly. I'll give him both barrels, too, and four conical pills should settle him. Are you ready?" "Quite ready," I replied, and the boat stopped.

In an instant the dark lines were visible again, but this time they came rapidly up to the surface, and five monstrous sharks showed themselves. The apparition was so sudden, and the sharks were so huge, so much larger than any I had seen before, that I started, and, had I cocked my rifle as I had been told to do, there is no knowing where I might have sent my random shot. But it has always been my practice not to cock till I see the object; and this has prevented my making many a bad miss. In a moment I recovered myself, and, as the foremost shark turned on his back and darted at the carcase, I took good aim, and fired nearly at the same moment with my friend. All our four balls told: one of them, as we afterwards found, going right through the heart. The smoke came full across my eyes, but there was a tremendous splash, and I caught an indistinct glimpse of the monster as he sprang half out of the water and fell back. Almost at the same instant, the big negro who had the harpoon sent it into the shark just below the lower jaw with such force, that, had he had more life in him than remained, he would hardly have escaped. Meantime, the other sharks, who sank for a moment when we fired, had risen again to the surface, and one of them had already torn a great bit out of the horse, giving such a violent jerk to the boat, that one of the niggers took fright, and before we could see what he was about, undid the rope by which the carcase was being towed, and it was immediately jerked into the water as the other sharks fastened on the prey. This they did in such numbers, and with such right good will, that before we could reload and prepare for another shot, they had dragged the carcase under water, and we could only tell by the bubbles and bloody foam what a worry was going on below. However, we had got one monster safe, and returned towing him in triumph. When we reached the landing-place there was quite a crowd to receive us. It took eight or ten men to drag the shark on shore, and we found he measured over sixteen feet long, and nearly six feet in circumference. His stomach was quite empty, which accounted for his being ravenous.

I was glad of a bath and a change of toilet, after which my friend drove me in his carriage round the west part of the island, of which some description may be acceptable. To begin then with the beginning, be it known that, between the eighteenth and nineteenth degrees of north latitude, a little to the east of Porto Rico, in an almost continuous cluster, lie the Virgin Islands, so called by Columbus from the eleven thousand of sainted memory, with whom in number these islets seemed to vie. Exactly in the centre of the group, is St. Thomas, and next to it, on the east, is St. John. All the islands to the east of St. John belong to the English, and all to the west belong to the Danes. You may tell the English possessions by the roughness of the nomenclature and the utter want of high-flown titles. There is, for example, Salt Island, followed by Ginger, Cooper's, and Beef Island. Next we come to Camanoe, Scrub, Guano, and Jost-van-Dykes Isles. Then there is Anegada, or "Drowned Island," famous or infamous for wrecks, where many a gallant seaman has gone to his rest beneath the waters. It is a curious place that Anegada. It lies all awash with the sea, and when the mist comes up, as it does very often, one would fancy the waves were rolling clean over it. Anegada is ten miles long, and has a reef to the south-east of nine miles more, and upon this reef many scores of vessels have gone to pieces. But to the west there is good anchorage, and abundance of funnel-shaped wells, full of fresh water, in which, curiously enough, the fresh water rises with the salt tide. The bays there in the old time swarmed with buccaneers. When they were gone, came gangs of wreckers and colonised the island, and reared stock, and grew cotton; but their true market-day was when a vessel struck on the reef, and many a rich prize they got, and

perhaps do get even now. A curious proof of the strong westerly current in the Atlantic is to be seen at Anegada, where the fishermen find sufficient cork drifted to them from the coast of Spain, to supply their nets. Bottles, too, launched in the River Gambia, have been picked up in the Virgin Islands. Between these islands themselves, the currents are in many places most violent. To row from island to island is a most dangerous and almost impossible undertaking. Many boats have been swept away, and their crews drowned in the attempt. Between the eastern part of St. Thomas and the Island of St. John, in particular, there is a furious current, and the waves rise in huge surges. When the southern tide is in its strength, it would be impossible for any small vessel to encounter that terrible sea.

Twelve miles to the west of Anegada is Virgin Gorda, or "Fat Virgin" Island, nine miles long and a mile broad, with some ten thousand inhabitants, who export sugar, rum, and tobacco. On the north-east is a good harbour, called Gorda Sound, and another to the north-west, called West Bay, and a third, Thomas's Bay, to the south. Three miles west of Virgin Gorda, is Tortola, nine miles long and three broad, with a population of eleven thousand, and a good harbour at Road Town, the capital. Moreover, here, with Tortola to the north, St. John's to the west, Virgin Gorda to the east, and a dozen little islands to the south, nature has formed a magnificent basin, fifteen miles long and three and a half broad, land-locked and sheltered from every wind, where all the navies of England might ride in safety. Why not choose Tortola as the station for the Royal Mail Company's vessels? Why go to St. Thomas, that nest of yellow fever, where fresh water is hard to get, and which belongs to a foreign power?

Not being able to answer this same why, I return to St. Thomas. The island is twelve miles long from east to west, and three broad; and across the whole length of it runs a range of hills, the highest point of which may be eight hundred feet above the sea. These hills were once covered with woods, and the island was then watered by rivulets; but the improvident Danes cut down the woods, the streams dried up, and the inhabitants now suffer from drought, insomuch that the captains of steamers are enjoined to husband their fresh water, lest none should be procurable at St. Thomas. Charlotte Amalia, the capital and harbour of St. Thomas, lies on the south coast, and opens to the south, so that vessels coming from Europe or North America have to make a half-circle to enter it. The approach is not without its dangers. There is, first of all, a rock called Frenchman's Cap, seven miles from the harbour's mouth, and four miles further on there is Buck Island. Between these you steer, but in mid-channel is a danger called "Scorpion Rock," with only twenty-one feet of water on it. Having cleared that (and there is a buoy on it to help you), you enter the harbour: having on your right, at its mouth, the lighthouse, the red light of which, being ninety-five feet above the sea, can be seen fifteen miles off. Near it is a fort called Mohlenfel's Battery. On the left are Prince Frederick's Battery, and the Great Carenage, where vessels can be moored during hurricanes. At the very entrance, however, are three other dangers. There is, first, on the west, a shoal which juts out the length of a cable from Frederick's Point; and then, a little east of the mid-channel, is Prince Rupert's Rock; and further east, and close to Mohlenfel's Battery, are the rocks called the Triangles. Lastly, there are coral rocks in the harbour itself.

The panorama of the harbour of St. Thomas has been extolled by a well-known writer, and with justice. The port itself is of a horse-shoe shape, and, having entered, the town is right before you, rising in three triangles, with a glittering white building to crown each apex, and, above all, the hills are of the brightest green, rendered more dazzling by the clearness of the atmosphere. To the left, the harbour runs out into a long creek, too shallow to be crossed except by boats. On the right of the town is Christiana Fort, garrisoned by half a regiment of Danes, and some artillerymen. Above, on the hills, is a tower, where in the good old times lived a notable buccaneer. Close by the fort are the King's Wharf and a hotel, and all about and around are such lovely bunches of flowering shrubs and trees, as almost to make one in love with the "white man's grave."

I had been amused with my expedition against the sharks in the afternoon, but now it was over my spirits went down. There is something fearfully depressing in St. Thomas and its associations. Sharks and yellow fever in the harbour, yellow fever and grinning black men in the town, the heat stifling, and the smells unbearable—this is the programme; and the talk is all of so-and-so who died on yester-night, and such-a-one who is like to die to-morrow. Our drive was not exhilarating. On the left, was the shallow stagnant creek, with a row of miserable huts, interspersed with shambles at the water's edge. On the right, were more huts and many cemeteries. There was the Moravian Cemetery, with all the slabs of exactly the same height and size; and there was the Jews' Cemetery, and the Catholic Cemetery, and what might be called the Omnibus Cemetery, for what the well-known writer before referred to irreverently terms the Hispano-Dano-Yankee-doodle-niggery-population-in-general. My host, the best of good fellows, who was never hipped himself, had no idea of comforting a man who was in low spirits. On my asking, out of the gloominess of my heart, "Is there any yellow fever here just now?" he replied, "Well, the yellow fever is always here. Just at present, however, we are considered rather clear. It is true there have been a few scattered cases—there have been five, for instance, in the house next mine—but only three died, and, for myself, I have no sort of apprehen-

sion, for I am a born St. Thomas man, and natives seldom suffer. In general, it is the new comers who get in for it." I could only mutter, "Consolatory, certainly!" and change the subject. I asked about the state of the colony. "Well," he said, "the American war has been pumpkins to us. Our house alone has cleared upwards of fifty thousand pounds since it began, and two or three other houses have been doing nearly as well. It's pretty, too, to see the blockade runners lying under the very noses of the Northern men-of-war. They see 'em load, up anchor, and off, and they mustn't chase 'em for four-and-twenty hours, though they know if they've a good start there's no chance of taking them. The times have been lively, too, with the sailors. The crews of the Confederate vessels have had so many fights with the Federal men, and the English have joined in with such jolly good will, first on one side, and then on the other, that now the Danes won't let any Americans land." "And pray," said I, "besides these rows, how do you amuse yourselves here?" "Well," was the reply, "we *don't* amuse ourselves. We trade!"

After our drive we dined at the hotel. The dinner consisted of all the most indigestible dishes conceivable, and at St. Thomas it is de rigueur to eat of them all. I went to bed with a racking headache, and in a state highly favourable for yellow fever. Morning came at last, however, without an attack, and released me from the tender mercies of the mosquitoes. I went round with my friend to several shops to make my purchases, posted my letters to England, and by noon was sailing for La Guaira in the schooner Yñez. Juan came on board at the last moment, having deserted me all the time I was at St. Thomas. He merely said, "Friends on shore, sir; you'll excuse my being late." I said, "Of course;" and begged him to release me from the importunity of the negro boatman who brought me on board, and who asked two pounds for the job, though the legal charge was only one dollar and eighty-two cents. We got rid of him at last for three dollars.

We ran out of St. Thomas's harbour on the 2nd of July with a fine breeze. The crew of the Yñez consisted of a captain, five men, and a boy, each blacker than the other, and all of an extremely hang-dog look. As I had thirty thousand sovereigns on board, it seems a miracle that they did not tumble me quietly into the water when I was asleep. The crew of the Yñez, however, were pirates only in look, and I lost among them nothing more important than a gold pencil-case. We slept on deck in a sort of hencoop, in which were not more vermin than are usually in hencoops. Our meals, over which the captain presided in his shirt-sleeves, were principally of land-tortoise, hard sour cheese, pickles, dried fish, pastels filled with nameless ingredients, and quimbombo: an excellent vegetable, and almost the only thing I could eat. It is the okro hibiscus, has somewhat the look of a young cucumber, and is full of a cold gluten, very pleasant in a hot climate. There was a Creole lady, with two or three small children, who lived in the cabin or hold of the vessel, and never made her appearance on deck throughout the whole passage. Once or twice, during a squall, I descended to this cabin, and found it full of ants, cockroaches, and rats. The Creole, half undressed, lay gasping with the heat, while her children, in a state of perfect nudity, scrambled over her. Besides this lady, myself, Juan, and an American doctor, there was also another passenger: a thin feeble old man, who was brought on board with great care. I heard him ask his servant for a cigar, which turned out to be strymonium, for the man was too ill to smoke tobacco; and to say this of a Spanish Creole, is saying a good deal.

About 5 P.M. we were passing the island of Santa Cruz, belonging to the Danes. The governor of St. Thomas shows his appreciation of the healthiness of his own island by living at Santa Cruz, which is thirty-two miles south of St. Thomas. Santa Cruz is nineteen miles long and five broad, and contains a population of fifty thousand souls. In general it is much flatter than St. Thomas; but there is one hill, Mount Eagle, which rises to one thousand one hundred and sixty-two feet above the sea, and another near it, called Blue Mountain, which is but sixty feet lower. There are two towns, Christiansted to the east, and Fredericksted to the west. At the former there is a harbour very difficult of access, but safe enough when once entered. The island is well cultivated. We passed Santa Cruz; the sun set; and after smoking a last cigar, I turned into my hencoop and slept soundly, except for a few minutes about midnight, when I soon went to sleep again with an indistinct idea of something disagreeable going on. The red horns of the sun were just showing above the horizon, when Juan came and woke me, under pretence of asking me if I would bathe; but I could see by the grin on his features that there was something wrong. Presently, not being able to contain himself any longer, he exploded into a chuckle, and said, "There's a dead man on board, sir."

"Indeed?" replied I, by no means gratified. "And pray who may he be, and what does he come on board for, if he's dead?"

"Well, sir," said Juan, "it's the old man, the passenger who seemed so ill. About midnight he got worse, and called the captain, and asked to be thrown overboard, he was in such pain. The captain said he could not accommodate him in that way, but he would get some hot fomentations, and see if that would ease the pain in his chest. 'It's no matter,' says the passenger. 'Whereabouts is the moon?' When the captain had showed him where the moon was, he said very quietly, 'When the moon goes down I shall die.' And so he did, sir. You would hardly believe it, but at the very moment the moon went down, the old man died."

"Did he ask for the doctor?" I inquired.

"Ask for the doctor! I should think not," said Juan, in high disdain. "Why, all the

doctors in New York couldn't have saved him; nor they couldn't have done him much harm neither. He was too far gone for that."

I walked forward to bathe, and there I saw a sad bundle, which told its own tale. It was the corpse sewn up in a hammock, with some six-pound shot belonging to the one gun of the schooner, attached, to sink it. An hour afterwards, a short prayer was said by the captain, and the body was launched into the sea. I watched it go down. It went fast—so fast that it was gone before a dolphin that had been playing about the bows, and darted out to see what the splash meant, could reach the spot.

The incident was a painful one, and conjured up melancholy reflections. There were only about a dozen of us in the schooner, reckoning crew and passengers together, and one was gone. I could not help thinking how wretched it would be to lie ill on board that little vessel, with only a hencoop to rest on, and only the American doctor for a medical attendant. The heat was overpowering, and, considering where we came from, it would have been no great wonder if we had had a visit from the yellow fever. Right glad was I, then, when at two P.M. on the 4th we passed the rock of Ochilla, one of the Aves Islands, which lies only eighty miles to the north of La Guaira. Ochilla is about ten miles in length, and a very dangerous reef projects from it for two miles in an easterly direction. Twenty miles off is a sunken rock, not given in the maps, on which a small vessel was totally lost about a year before we passed. Her crew had scarcely time to take to the boats when she foundered. There are from two hundred to three hundred tons of guano on Ochilla, which may be worth twelve pounds a ton. The place had some interest for me, for one of the claims I was going out to settle was called the Aves Island claim. The Americans had gone to a rock of that name, nearer St. Thomas, to collect guano, and had been stopped by the Venezuelans, who maintain that the Aves Islands belong to them. For the loss caused by this demurrer, the Americans now claimed one hundred and fifty-five thousand dollars of the Venezuelan government: a sum sufficient to have plated the whole rock with silver instead of guano.

Two hours after passing Ochilla, we saw the great mountain called La Silla, or "The Saddle," which overhangs La Guaira. The Silla is eight thousand six hundred feet high, and we saw it at seventy miles' distance. As the sun set, we discerned the lights at La Guaira, but the wind now fell, or came only in fitful gusts. At one moment we were running at the rate of nine knots an hour, straight, as it seemed, on shore; for the land, being overshadowed by this stupendous mountain, appeared much nearer than it was. The next instant we were becalmed, with all sail set, and flapping so heavily as to banish sleep from my eyes. The nigger captain and his crew, however, being used to it, lay like logs, and we might have drifted on shore for all they seemed to care. Morning came at last, and with it a gentle breeze, which carried us to our anchorage at La Guaira.

THE SAYINGS OF SAADI.

Rose-leaves the paper on which Saadi wrote,
His ink red wine from a gold beaker's throat,
Mixed with a lover's tears, distilled from eyes
Which a first love illumined like sunrise.
His magic pen a nightingale's thin beak,
From angel lips Saadi had learned to speak.
These sayings, wisdom, mixed with music's sweet,
He poured like pearls at Giamschid's princely feet:

AMBITION.

Two dervishes in peace upon one carpet sleep, so Sajib sings,
But Asia, yea, the world's too small for two contending kings.

SUCCESS.

A ruby is a ruby, though it's hid in dust or mire,
But sand's still sand though blown to heaven or higher.

A SLANDER.

A lie's a feeble weed, till it take root and sprout;
Once grown, and full of fruit, it needs ten yoke of bulls to drag it out.

AVARICE.

Were all the universe a board heaped up with plenteousness,
It would not satisfy the eye of hungry avarice.
Like a rich fruit he'd slice the sun, and ere the meal was o'er,
Would frown and whet his eager knife, and straightway ask for more.

ENVY.

The envious hate the very sun; but though the blessed light
The owls and wolves and bats detest, shall we then wish for night?

SMALL BEGINNINGS.

The spring a single peasant's jug can throw in shade,
Feeds the great rolling stream through which no elephants can wade.

LOVE.

The thorn of parting, red and keen, though it be hidden, grows
Beneath the inner heart of hearts of every summer rose.

SEPARATION.

As dripping planks that wash together, and then drift away,
So I and thou, my buried love, were parted one dark day.

A BUNDLE OF SCOTCH NOTES.

The greatest glory of Scotland is her system of education. Like the constitution of the French army, which encourages every private soldier to feel that he carries in his knapsack the bâton of a field-marshal, the system of education in Scotland opens the gates of honour to the very humblest in the land. Opportunities of education are the birthright of every Scot. He is born to a share in the teaching of a parochial school, as he is born to a share in the air of heaven; and perhaps, all things considered, the teaching costs him less than the

air, which, among the northern hills, is sometimes far from genial. The word "parochial" is suggestive to the English mind of pauperism, of poor's-rates, a board of guardians, and the workhouse. As designating the character of Scotch schools, it has no such meaning. The parochial school is simply the public school of the parish, and in Scotland every parish has its public school, as in England every parish has its church. As in England, the rich and poor meet together in church on the common ground of religion, so in Scotland the rich and poor meet together in the parish school on the common ground of education. Education is so sacred a thing in the eyes of Scotchmen, that the son of a laird will not disdain to receive it sitting on the same form with the son of a labourer. Elsewhere in the world the "Republic of Letters" is but a phrase; here it is a reality.

The parochial school system of Scotland is founded upon true philosophy and a wise economy. It charges the property of the country with a share of the duty of educating the people. The charge falls directly upon the landed proprietors, but indirectly every inhabitant of the parish is a contributor to the same object. It is an indirect tax, included in the aggregate amount of the rent, which no one feels, because it is not set down as a separate item. Possibly in the lapse of time rents have come to be assessed without any regard to the school tax, and their amount would be neither more nor less if the system did not exist. The owners of the soil in each parish (the "heritors," as they are called) are bound by law to provide a school-house, and to pay a properly qualified schoolmaster a certain annual salary. This law was enacted in the reign of James the Sixth, and was one of the first fruits of the Scottish Reformation. The institution to which it gave effect was intimately bound up with the scheme of the Presbyterian Church, and to the clergy of the presbytery was assigned the duty of appointing the schoolmaster.

The emoluments of a Scotch parochial schoolmaster are not large; but they are in most cases sufficient to enable him to live in comfort, and to maintain the position of a gentleman. His salary in money, derived from the heritors, at one time varied with the price of corn. This custom had its origin when man in Scotland lived, or was supposed to live, on oatmeal bread alone; but it is out of date now. When corn was high, the schoolmaster, like the minister, got more money to buy it with, and when it was low, he got less. The salaries of parochial schoolmasters range from thirty-five to sixty pounds a year, with the school fees, which, in some instances, bring them up to a hundred pounds; the amount in many cases being increased by the interest of sums of money bequeathed by benevolent persons for the special purpose of encouraging the work of education, either generally, or in particular localities. The bequests and "mortifications" (or mortmain devisements of property) which have been made at various times for the purposes of education, are without number. There is scarcely a school that does not benefit by one; there is not a college that does not possess scores. In England, posthumous philanthropy is apt to manifest itself in an almshouse; in Scotland it takes the more fruitful form of a bursary, a scholarship, or a schoolmaster's fund.

With forty or fifty pounds a year and the school fees, a free house, a garden to grow his fruit and vegetables, and possibly the liberty of pasturage for a cow, the parochial schoolmaster is passing rich. As a gentleman and a scholar, he moves in the best society, and is looked up to as one of the magnates of the parish.

His scholars are of every degree, of all ages, of both sexes, and they come from far and near. The minister's sons go down from the manse to learn Latin and Greek; the sons of farmers, large and small, of cottars, and even servants, gather together from the distant hills to learn side by side with them in the same classes. As some of them come from a distance of three or four miles, it is necessary that they should bring their dinners with them. Those dinners generally consist of oatmeal cakes and milk. A Scotch schoolboy, making a pilgrimage to the Temple of Learning, is somewhat oddly furnished for his journey. In the summer he prefers to go barefoot, with his shoes and stockings slung over his shoulders; besides this encumbrance, he carries two bags and a tin can. One bag contains his mental pabulum, in the shape of Lennie's Grammar, Rudiman's Rudiments of the Latin Tongue, and Cæsar's Commentaries; the other bag contains his physical pabulum, which is simply oat cake; the can contains milk.

The course of study comprises reading, writing, arithmetic, English grammar, Latin, Greek, and mathematics. The fee for the whole course averages five shillings a quarter, or one pound a year! Excluding Latin, Greek, and mathematics, it is sometimes less than that amount. Thus, the education of a boy, supposing him to remain at school for eight years, is, at the utmost, eight pounds, and for this amount he may be qualified to pass the matriculation examination at the university. The examination of the schoolmaster by the ministers of the presbytery is a guarantee for his competency, and it is a rule that no one shall be appointed to the post of parochial schoolmaster unless he has been four years at college. Many of the schoolmasters are Masters of Arts, and highly accomplished scholars.

There is an extraordinary ambition among parents of the lower class to give their sons a classical education. In the old days, when the honourable office of the ministry was the highest prize within their reach, it was the dearest hope and ambition of poor parents to see one of their sons "wag his head in the poopit;" but now, when so many appointments in the civil and military service of the country are thrown open to competition, there is a wider inducement to qualify more than one male member of the family for such various opportunities of ad-

vancement as the new system affords. The result is that a large proportion of the scholars at the parochial schools now learn Greek and Latin, and it will be found that many of the successful candidates in the recent competitive examinations for government appointments, are Scotchmen of humble parentage, who received their early education at the parochial schools.

English grammar is very thoroughly taught in the Scotch schools. In fact, English is taught as a foreign tongue, and learning it in this way, the pupils acquire a precise and intimate knowledge of the rules by which it is governed. The Latin and Greek grammars are also well taught, and it is no uncommon thing to find a boy of twelve years old who can construe a passage in Virgil or Ovid with the greatest accuracy, and with a clear and intelligent perception of the laws of Latin composition. I have known a flashy Oxford graduate, with Latin verses at the tip of his tongue, stick dead at such a test.

The poor in Scotland covet education as some people covet money, with greedy avidity; and the children, no less than the parents, are fully alive to its value and importance. You will see shepherd-boys conning the Latin grammar while tending the cattle in the fields. The cow is in the corn, but the little Scotch Boy Blue is not asleep. He is absorbed in a problem of Euclid.

The parochial school established by law, and supported chiefly by the owners of the land, is in most cases supplemented by another seminary established by the General Assembly of the Church, and supported by public subscription. It may be mentioned, in illustration of the primitive character of these temples of learning, that the scholars in the winter-time bring their own firing, and instead of sending a load of fuel to last for a month or quarter, each scholar brings a peat in his hand for the day's use. Fancy a London schoolboy going along the streets carrying a lump of coal for the school fire! But primitive as these schools are, and plain and rough as are all their appointments, the education they impart is sound and practical, and there is scarcely any one in the parish so poor that he cannot afford to avail himself of their advantages. To put the case in a familiar form, a plain education in Scotland costs about threepence a week; a classical education about sixpence! There is nothing eleemosynary in the constitution of these schools. The education which they afford is the right of every Scotchman, and all classes resort to them without scruple. As to the eleemosynary idea, I quote the remark of Canon Moseley, who, recently at the Church Congress, advocated the introduction of the Scotch educational system into England. "The education of every member of parliament," he said, "has been in some degree eleemosynary, and had it not been so it would not have been so good." And he adds, with equal truth, that every class in England has help with its education, except the middle class.

At fifteen or sixteen years of age—sometimes earlier—a Scotch boy is ready to go to college; but supposing him to be the son of very poor parents, how is he to be sent there? how is he to be maintained there? Hitherto, while attending the parochial school, he has lived at home, sharing the poor and often scanty fare provided for the family; but now, when he goes to Aberdeen, he will need a lodging; he will have to pay money every day for his food; he will require to dress better than at home; he will be under the obligation to purchase a gown; and his fees will be eight times the amount of those of the parochial school. A glance at the constitution and endowments of the Scottish Universities will show how the humblest of the Scottish youth, with little or no means of their own, are enabled to go to college and maintain themselves there, until, at the end of four years, they step forth into the wide arena of the world, armed at all points for the battle of life. While English youths of the same class sigh for one single helping hand to be held out to them, the Scotch youths are embarrassed by a number of helping hands, and their only difficulty sometimes is which to choose. Everything in Scotland has conspired to afford opportunities of education. The King's College and University of Aberdeen was instituted by the Pope of Rome at the instance of James the Third; Marischal College and University was a child of the Reformation. The one was endowed by the Catholic Church, the other was founded on its ruins, and nourished upon its spoils. Happen what would, the Scottish youth, as regards education, was always a gainer. The anxiety of the people to build and endow schools and colleges, amounted almost to a mania, and every change of government or religion, though it might create a revolution in other affairs, only tended to give further impetus to the progress of education. The Pope, Episcopacy, John Knox, Oliver Cromwell, all the contending political and ecclesiastical elements of more than three centuries, combined to favour the cause which Scotchmen had so much at heart. Men of wealth and learning seemed to live with no other purpose than to die and leave their possessions to be "mortified" for the benefit of schools and colleges. Many mortified a portion of their estates during their lifetime; some favouring King's College, others Marischal's. [Until the year 1859, the two colleges were separate and distinct universities, each having its own set of professors, its own bursaries, and its own complete curriculum of study. The union of the two was effected in direct opposition to the wishes of the Scottish people, by the influence in parliament of half a dozen perverse individuals, who claimed, without any warranty whatever, to represent the interests of their countrymen. The red gowns are no longer to be seen in the quadrangle of Marischal's; its class rooms are vacant (except such as are occupied by students of medicine), its corridors silent. And so it is that I have come back to mourn over the grave of my Alma Mater.]

While the colleges were thus endowed with

lands and grants of money, similar bequests and mortifications were constantly being made to provide scholarships or bursaries, as they are called in Scotland, for the students. Some were handed over in trust to the college, to be offered to the competition of all comers; others were devised to the members of certain families, or persons of a certain name, or were placed at the disposal of professors, ministers, or magistrates of towns. The deeds of "mortification" executed by Highland lairds are written in quite a regal style. Thus McIntosh, or McIvor "of that ilk," begins with We, and goes on to dispense so many merks, or pounds Scots, to found a bursary, to be presented by the lairds of that ilk to youths of their name or clan. Many bursaries have been founded for the benefit of any youth bearing a certain name; and such bursaries may be enjoyed at one time by the son of a laird, and at another by a cow-boy. Some have been left without any conditions as to name or clanship. As, for example, Sir John McPherson bequeathed two thousand five hundred pounds of his Carnatic stock to afford an annual bursary to any Highland student who might be selected to receive it. And this he did in gratitude for the education which he received at the University of Old Aberdeen. The bursaries range in amount from five pounds per annum to thirty pounds. Thus it happens that a poor Scotch boy has several strings to his Apollonic bow. He can go out to Aberdeen and enter for the general competition, or it may be that his name is Mackenzie, or Mac-whatnot, and a bursary is his by right; or he may have interest with some patron, or he may be entitled to a scholarship simply because he is the native of a certain parish. A lad will sometimes go out to Aberdeen with a presentation bursary in his pocket, enter the general competition, and win another. He is not allowed, however, to retain two, and being obliged to relinquish one, he, of course, relinquishes the one of lesser value.

The original constitution of the Scotch colleges was monastic; that is to say, the students lived within the precincts of the college, took their meals at a common table, and were constantly under the government and discipline of the college officers. This system was abolished more than two centuries ago, and the students now reside where they please, being only amenable to college authority during the hours of study. This plan is much more convenient for students of limited means, whose poverty will sometimes afford them no better lodging than a garret. Professor Blackie, who was Professor of the Latin Humanity in my time at Marischal's, used to tell a story of a Highland student who was charged by his fellows with having so far desecrated the academic gown, as to have perambulated the streets with a barrow and cried "'taties." The Highlander admitted hawking the potatoes, but denied desecrating the gown. He had been careful to put off his gown while he cried 'taties. The curriculum of study at Aberdeen extends over four years, at the end of which time the student, if he can pass the examination, receives the degree of Master of Arts, when he proudly writes A.M. (not M.A., as in England) after his name.

(And here, I opine, as in the pronunciation of the vowels, the Scotch are classically correct, and the English wrong.)

The first session is devoted to Greek and Latin; the second to Greek and Latin, with the addition of mathematics and natural history; during the third session, the classics are subordinate to mathematics and natural philosophy; and in the fourth the students, while continuing the study of mathematics, devote a portion of their time to moral philosophy and logic. The matriculation examination is a very easy one; and there is seldom an instance of a boy being rejected. It is enough to be able to translate and construe a chapter in Cæsar's Commentaries. Less Greek is looked for, and if a boy have some acquaintance with "tupto," he will pass. I believe the standard has been raised a little lately, and perhaps this was necessary for the credit of the university. It is possible, however, without going far in this direction, to go too far. The very essence of the Scotch universities are their applicability to the wants of the middle and humbler classes. If the matriculation examination were raised so much as to require the poor student to spend another year at the parochial school, there is no doubt that many lads would not be able to go to the university at all.

Student life in Aberdeen runs in a very quiet current. If it were not that the lads wear scarlet gowns, their existence in the community would scarcely be observed. The majority of them are poor, and they have neither the means nor the inclination to indulge in the roystering kind of life which prevails at the English universities. They are all more or less impressed with the importance of making the most of their time and opportunities. They do not forget that they have fathers and mothers at home, who have exercised self-denial, and made great efforts to send them there; nor are they unmindful of the honour of the parochial school at which they received the elements of their education. Above all, they have an ambition to rise in life, and be something better than their forefathers.

The expenses of the five months' session at Aberdeen are exceedingly moderate. A student may lodge pretty comfortably for five shillings a week; for this sum he can rent a large room, with a recess in the corner for his box-bed. The fees to the professors amount to no more than seven or eight pounds for the whole session. Food is comparatively cheap in Aberdeen, and much is done upon oatmeal and fish. A boy, with a bursary of twenty-five pounds, can pay all his expenses for the session, including the fees. Those who have less, receive what assistance their friends can afford, and this assistance generally takes the form of a box (sent in monthly by the carrier), containing oatmeal, fowls eggs, &c. What would a fine gentleman

of Oxford or Cambridge say to the daily life of the humble student of Aberdeen? A breakfast of porridge and milk, to begin the day; then away through the streets, in a red cloak, with a strapful of books at his side; four hours of Greek and Latin; a short interval for dinner (consisting rather often of tea, with a haddock), back again in the red cloak to more dead languages and dry mathematics; and then the evening spent at home, getting up the tasks for the next day. Few of the students can afford to have the assistance of private tutors, and it is often very hard work for the young students, whose preliminary education has been conducted in a hurry, to keep pace with the progress of the classes. I should mention that the salaries of the professors range from three hundred to six hundred pounds a year.

The education received at the University of Aberdeen is not as high as that of Oxford or Cambridge; but the chief reason of this is the early age at which the students are allowed to matriculate. A lad who goes to college at fourteen is necessarily but little advanced in learning, and with the same opportunities for the next four years, it is not to be expected that he will come out at eighteen with the same amount of knowledge as an Oxford or Cambridge man of three or four-and-twenty. Still the Aberdeen universities have produced some very sound and accomplished scholars. On four occasions in succession lately, the highest honours of Cambridge have been carried off by Aberdeen students.

Scotland has done all this upon a little oatmeal. Could not England do something of the kind upon her roast beef and plum-pudding?

From Aberdeen, I betook myself further northward by a railway which has only a single line of rails. This is a peculiarity of all railways running north of the Granite City. They have been constructed with a due regard to economy, but with little regard to speed. The distance from Aberdeen to Banff is only forty-six miles, and the journey occupies more than three hours. I have a very strong impression that the Scotch are not so enterprising at home as they are abroad. There is lack of spirit shown in making shift with a single line of rails on the great highway which connects the capital of the lowlands with the capital of the highlands. Like want of enterprise is manifested in minor matters. At Inveramsay there is a junction, where the trains going north wait for the trains coming south, and vice versâ. This delay in both journeys is caused by the single line arrangement. But at this junction, where passengers are waiting at all hours of the day, there is no refreshment-room. Is this being canny, and having a keen eye to business? At every turn in this country, so celebrated for its thrift, and industry, and love of the bawbees, I notice many little opportunities of making money, which the people neglect, either because they don't see them, or because they despise them. Here, at this junction, where I am kicking my heels for half an hour, I want a bottle of ale, and I cannot have it; I want a newspaper, and I cannot have it; I want a time-table, and I cannot even have that.

There is another peculiarity of these northern railways. There are only two classes of carriages, first and third. There is no second class. I have a theory that this arrangement corresponds with the state of Scotch society. There are only two classes in Scotland, the upper classes, and another class immediately below them. The distinction which the Scotch railways make has reference to means, not to station. Those who travel third class in Scotland are equal in respectability and intelligence to the middle class of England; but they are not so well able to pay the middle class fare. Third class is merely written on the doors of the carriages to meet the provision of the act of parliament for carrying passengers at a penny a mile. When I go north of Aberdeen, I prefer to travel by the third class. Your first class Scotchman is a very solemn person, very reserved, very much occupied in maintaining his dignity, and while saying little, appearing to claim to think the more. The people whom you meet in the third-class carriages, on the other hand, are extremely free. There is no reserve about them whatever. They begin to talk, the moment they enter the carriage, about the crops, the latest news, anything that may occur to them. And they are full of humour and jocularity.

My fellow-passengers on this journey were small farmers, artisans, clerks, and fishermen. They discussed everything, politics, literature, religion, agriculture, and even scientific matters, not in the heavy style of the Mutual Association for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, but in a light and airy spirit of banter and fun. An old fellow, whose hands claimed long acquaintance with the plough, gave a whimsical description of the parting of the Atlantic telegraph cable, which set the whole carriage in a roar.

"Have you ony shares in it, Sandy?" said one.

"Na, na," said Sandy. "I've left off speculatin' since my wife took to wearing crinolines. I canna afford it noo."

"Fat d'ye think of the rinderpest, Sandy?" inquired another.

"Weel, I'm thinking that if my coo taks it, Tibbie and me winna ha' muckle milk to our tay."

The knotty question of Predestination came up, and could not be settled. When the train stopped at the next station, Sandy said:

"Bide a wee, there's a Doctor o' Deveenity in ane o' the first-class carriages. I'll gang and ask him fat he thinks aboot it." And out Sandy got to consult the doctor. We could see him parleying with the eminent divine over the carriage door, and presently he came running back, just as the train was starting, and was bundled in neck and crop by the guard.

"Weel, Sandy," said his oppugner on the Predestination question, "did the doctor o' deveenity gie you his opinion?"

"Ay, did he."

"And fat did he say aboot it?"

"Weel, he just said he didna ken and he didna care."

The notion of a doctor of divinity neither kenning nor caring about the highly important doctrine of Predestination, so tickled the fancy of the company, that they went into fits of laughter.

A Scotchman is never surprised at anything, and soon gets used to a change of circumstances. Make him a king to-day, and to-morrow he will feel that he has been a king all his life. Here was this auld carl Sandy, who had never seen a railway until he was half a century old, complaining of the slowness of the travelling. After having expressed many wishes for a bottle of Bass, and having facetiously reproached the directors for not laying Bass on in pipes for the free use of the passengers, he launched into a severe criticism of the engineering skill which could devise nothing better than a locomotive. And Sandy concluded by wondering "when they were going to blaw us through pipes."

When Sandy seemed to have exhausted himself, one of the young men (evidently a shop-lad) took up a book, and began to read.

"Fat buke's that you've got?" said Sandy.

"It's a work by Laurence Sterne," said the youth, rather pompously, evidently thinking that Sandy had never heard of Laurence Sterne.

"Ay, ay," said Sandy; "wisn'a he the chiel that grat ower a deed cuddy, while he was leaving his puir auld mither to sterve? Maybe it's Tristram Shandy you're reading?"

The youth, a little abashed, owned that it was.

You cannot sit long in a railway carriage in Scotland without being invaded by a missionary, generally a semi-clerical-looking youth, with a bagful of tracts, who no sooner enters than he takes out a book and addresses the passengers as O my friends. It is the practice of these emissaries to pass from carriage to carriage, so that, in the course of the journey, they may be able to bring all the passengers under the influence of the "truth;" always proceeding upon the gratuitous presumption that nobody knows the "truth" but themselves. It fared ill with the young evangelist who came into our carriage. Sandy immediately tackled him on many abstruse points of theological dispute, of which the poor boy had never heard; and, following these up with a whimsical description of Jonah's adventures with the whale, he so far got the best of the controversy that he caused the missionary to drop his mask of solemnity, and burst into a laugh, in spite of himself.

And here I take the opportunity to remark how frequently Scotch funny stories are founded upon Biblical subjects, and have reference to ministers, precentors, and odd things that have occurred in church. There are thousands of stories current in Scotland about ludicrous mistakes that have been made in the pulpit, and not a few of them make rather free with the personages of sacred history.

It is curious how Scotchmen will Scotchify the names of persons, places, and things, which were originally Scotch. There is no rule for the process. Ruthven is called Raffan, and here we are slackening speed at a little town, which is spelt Turriff, and is called Turra. Peterhead lies on this route—Peterhead, which is known throughout the world for its red granite. It is also famous in Scotland for its fleet of whalers; and the names of many of its skippers figure in the history of the Arctic expeditions. I have no inducement to turn aside to Peterhead, and hold straight on to Banff. Modern tourists do not often take this route, at which I am surprised; for the country is exceedingly beautiful, and the two little towns of Banff and Macduff, opposite to each other on the shores of a lovely bay, with the river Deveron falling into the sea midway between them, present a scenic picture which will forcibly remind the traveller of Naples. Like Naples, Macduff has a mountain, though it is not quite so high as Vesuvius, and does not send forth fire and smoke, except on grand national occasions, when the inhabitants celebrate their joy with a bonfire. As bearing out the classical character of the place, the Hill o' Doon is surmounted by a Temple of Venus, erected by the late Earl of Fife—who was a worshipper of the goddess, as the last generation of Londoners may have heard. At the foot of this hill, the Deveron is spanned by the "bonny Brig o' Banff," which the laddie cam' ower when he left the girl behind him; and, away up the valley for miles by the Deveron side, stretch the gardens and grounds of Duff House, forming one of the most beautiful parks in the kingdom. The white Brig of Alvah, with its single arch, backed by towering rocks, carpeted with fern, and nodding with the leaf-plumage of the silver birch, is a scene in a dream of fairyland. The scenery of the highlands is grand, and stern, and rugged; and the music that sweeps over it is the roar of the cataract, and the thunder of the pines; but here it is soft and sweet, and the breeze comes in a breath laden with the fragrance of lowland flowers, stirring the leaves gently. The calm beauty of this scene on a summer's day is something to be felt—not described.

It is intensely interesting to me, while approaching Banff by the railway, to look down at the old coach road, and think that along that very road Dr. Johnson, seated beside Boswell, in Frazer of Strichen's cart, made his pilgrimage to the same town. "At night we came to Banff," he says, "where I remember nothing that particularly claimed my attention." Seeing that the doctor came to Banff at night, and went away the next morning early, I don't know how he could have seen anything at all but the interior of the tavern at which he put up. Indeed, this is all that he attempts to describe; and so we have this about Banff, or, as it was then called, Bamff:

"The art of joining squares of glass with lead

is little used in Scotland, and in some places is totally forgotten. The frames of their windows are all of wood." (Fancy accounting this as a reproach to them, when it only showed that they were in advance of their time.) "These windows do not move upon hinges, but are pushed up and drawn down in grooves." (There again!) Now for a full sonorous blast of the trumpet. "He that would have his window open, must hold it with his hand, unless, what may be sometimes found among good contrivers, there may be a nail which he may stick into a hole to keep it from falling." Lest any one should think I am doing an "imitation of an eminent author," I beg to make reference to page 23 of the celebrated "Journey."

Dr. Johnson might have had something more interesting to tell us. If, for example, he had spent a day at Banff, he might have discovered that its situation was singularly beautiful; that it was one of the oldest royal burghs in Scotland; that it was once the site of a Carmelite monastery, the history of whose foundation is lost in the remote recesses of the past; that its castle was the birthplace and early home of Archbishop Sharpe; and that it was on its gallow hill that Macpherson, the bold outlaw, who "robbed the rich and gave to the poor," "played a tune, and danced it roun' beneath the gallows tree."

But my heart is full as I "come back" ower the bonny Brig o' Banff, and I can say no more at present.

FACES ON A BATTLE-FIELD.

The celebrated report of Dr. Chenu on the mortality caused by war, contains some interesting information concerning the appearances presented by some who die a violent death on the field of battle. One surgeon says that, wandering over the battle-field of the Alma, on the third day after the fight, he observed with astonishment a number of Russian corpses whose attitude and expression of countenance were precisely those of life. Some did certainly present an aspect which showed that they had suffered severely just previous to dissolution, but these were few in number compared with those who wore a calm and resigned expression, as though they had passed away in the act of prayer. Others had a smile on their faces, and looked as if they were in the act of speaking; one in particular attracted his special attention; he was lying partly on his side, his knees were bent under him, his hands were clasped together and pointing upward, his head was thrown back, and he was apparently still praying—evidently he was in the act of doing so at the moment when death laid his hand upon him. Another medical man relates that after the battle of Inkerman, the faces of many of the dead still wore a smile; while others had a threatening expression. Some lay stretched on their backs as if friendly hands had prepared them for burial. Some were still resting on one knee, their hands grasping their muskets. In some instances, the cartridge remained between the teeth, or the musket was held in one hand, and the other was uplifted as though to ward off a blow, or appealing to Heaven. The faces of all were pale, as though cut in marble. As the wind swept across the battle-field it waved the hair, and gave the bodies such an appearance of life, that a spectator could hardly help thinking they were about to rise to continue the fight.

Another surgeon, describing the appearance of the corpses on the field of Magenta, says that they furnish indubitable proof that man may cease to exist without suffering the least pain. Those struck on the head generally lay with their faces on the ground, their limbs retaining the position they were in at the instant they were struck, and most of these still held their rifles: showing that when a ball entered the brain it causes such a sudden contraction of the muscles that there is not time for the hand to loose its hold of the weapon before death. Another peculiarity observed in the case of those who were wounded in the brain, was, the suddenness with which they died even when suspected to be out of danger. During the battle of Solferino, a rifleman was wounded in the head by a ball which passed through the skull and buried itself in the brain. His wound was dressed, and he was stretched on straw, with his head resting on his knapsack, like his wounded comrades. He retained the full use of his faculties, and chatted about his wound, almost with indifference, as he filled his pipe and lay smoking it. Nevertheless, before he had finished it, death came upon him, and he was found lying in the same attitude, with his pipe still between his teeth. He had never uttered a cry, or given any sign that he was suffering pain.

In cases where the ball had entered the heart, nearly the same appearances were presented as in the cases of those who had been struck in the brain; death was what we term instantaneous, but it was not quite so swift as in the former case; there was generally time for a movement in the act of dying. There was a Zouave who had been struck full in the breast; he was lying on his rifle, the bayonet was fixed, and pointing in such a way as showed that he was in the act of charging when struck. His head was uplifted, and his countenance still bore a threatening appearance, as if he had merely stumbled and fallen, and were in the act of rising again. Close by him lay an Austrian foot soldier, with clasped hands and upturned eyes, who had died in the act of praying. Another foot soldier had fallen dead as he was in the act of fighting; his fists were closed, one arm was in the act of warding off a blow, and the other was drawn back in the act of striking.

On another battle-field, several French soldiers lay in a line, with their bayonets pointing in the direction of the foe they were advancing against, when a storm of grape mowed them down. On the left bank of the river Tessin, several Austrian officers lay dead. Some of them

were remarkable for the noble expression of their faces, the extreme neatness of their dress, and the cleanliness of their persons. Most of them had fair hair, and their countenances bore the stamp of calm resignation. The best opportunity of seeing the aspect of the masses who died on the field, was when they lay stretched beside the trenches which were destined to be their final resting-place. So far were their faces from presenting the livid appearance and the expression of despair which painters are in the habit of producing in pictures of battle-fields, that a spectator could hardly help calling to the burying parties to wait a little before covering them up. They were so like Life.

HALF A MILLION OF MONEY.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "BARBARA'S HISTORY."

CHAPTER LXX. MR. GREATOREX IN SEARCH OF AN INVESTMENT.

While Saxon and his friend were yachting and fighting, and London was yet full to overflowing, and Francesco Secondo was still, to all appearance, firmly seated on his throne, Mr. Laurence Greatorex bent his steps one brilliant July morning in the direction of Chancery-lane, and paid a visit to William Trefalden.

He had experienced some little difficulty in making up his mind to this step; for it was an exceedingly disagreeable one, and required no small amount of effort in its accomplishment. He had seen and avoided the lawyer often enough during the last two or three months; but he had never spoken to him since that affair of the stopped cheque. His intention had been never to exchange civil speech or salutation with William Trefalden again; but to hate him heartily, and manifest his hatred openly, all the days of his life. And he would have done this uncompromisingly, if his regard for Saxon had not come in the way. But he liked that young fellow with a genuine liking (just as he hated the lawyer with a genuine hatred), and, cost what it might, he was determined to serve him. So, having thought over their last conversation —that conversation which took place in the train, between Portsmouth and London; having looked in vain for the registration of any company which seemed likely to be the one referred to; having examined no end of reports, prospectuses, lists of directors, and the like, he resolved, despite his animosity and his reluctance, to see William Trefalden face to face, and try what could be learned in an interview.

Perhaps, even in the very suspicion which prompted him to look after Saxon's interests, despite Saxon's own unwillingness to have them looked after, there may have been a lurking hope, a half-formed anticipation of something like vengeance. If William Trefalden was not acting quite fairly on Saxon Trefalden's behalf, if there should prove to be knavery or laxity in some particular of these unknown transactions, would it not be quite as sweet to expose the defrauder as to assist the defrauded?

Laurence Greatorex did not plainly tell himself that he was actuated by a double motive in what he was about to do. Men of his stamp are not given to analysing their own thoughts and feelings. Keen-sighted enough to detect the hidden motives of others, they prefer to make the best of themselves, and habitually look at their own acts from the most favourable point of view. So the banker, having made up his mind to accept the disagreeable side of his present undertaking, complacently ignored that which might possibly turn out to be quite the reverse, and persuaded himself, as he walked up Fleet-street, that he was doing something almost heroic in the cause of friendship.

He sent in his card, and was shown at once to William Trefalden's private room.

"Good morning, Mr. Trefalden," said he, with that noisy affectation of ease that Sir Charles Burgoyne so especially disliked; "you are surprised to see me here, I don't doubt."

But William Trefalden, who would have manifested no surprise had Laurence Greatorex walked into his room in lawn sleeves and a mitre, only bowed, pointed to a seat, and replied:

"Not at all. I am happy to see you, Mr. Greatorex."

"Thanks." And the banker sat down, and placed his hat on the table. "Any news from Norway?"

"From my cousin Saxon? No. At present not any."

"Really?"

"I do not expect him to write to me."

"Not at all?"

"Why, no—or, at all events, not more than once during his absence. We have exchanged no promises on the score of correspondence; and I am no friend to letter-writing, unless on business."

"You are quite right, Mr. Trefalden. Mere letter-writing is well enough for school-girls and sweethearts; but it is a delusion and a snare to those who have real work on their hands. One only needs to look at a shelf of Horace Walpole's Correspondence to know that the man was an idler and a trifler all his life."

Mr. Trefalden smiled a polite assent.

"But I am not here this morning to discourse on the evils of pen and ink," said Greatorex. "I have come, Mr. Trefalden, to ask your advice."

"You shall be welcome to the best that my experience can offer," replied the lawyer.

"Much obliged. Before going any further, however, I must take you a little way into my confidence."

Mr. Trefalden bowed.

"You must know that I have a little private property. Not much—only a few thousands; but, little as it is, it is my own; and is *not* invested in the business.

Mr. Trefalden was all attention.

"It is not invested in the business," repeated the banker; "and I do not choose that it should be. I want to keep it apart—snug—safe—

handy—wholly and solely at my own disposal. You understand?"

Mr. Trefalden, with a furtive smile, replied that he understood perfectly.

"Nor is this all. I have expensive tastes, expensive habits, expensive friends, and therefore I want all I can get for my money. Till lately I have been lending it at—well, no matter at how much per cent; but now it's just been thrown upon my hands again, and I am looking out for a fresh investment."

Mr. Trefalden, leaning back in his chair, was, in truth, not a little perplexed by the frankness with which Laurence Greatorex was placing these facts before him. However, he listened and smiled, kept his wonder to himself, and waited for what should come next.

"After this preface," added Greatorex, "I suppose I need scarcely tell you the object of my visit."

"I have not yet divined it," replied the lawyer.

"I want to know if you can help me to an investment."

Mr. Trefalden made no secret of the surprise with which he heard this request.

"*I* help you to an investment!" he repeated. "My dear sir, you amaze me. In matters of that kind, you must surely be far better able to help yourself than I am to help you."

"Upon my soul, now, I don't see that, Mr. Trefalden."

"Nay, the very nature of your own business"

"This is a matter which I am anxious to keep apart from our business—altogether apart," interrupted Mr. Greatorex.

"I quite understand that; but what I do not understand is, that you, a banker, should apply to me, a lawyer, for counsel on a point of this kind."

"Can you not understand that I may place more reliance on your opinion than on my own?"

Mr. Trefalden smiled polite incredulity.

"My dear Mr. Greatorex," he replied, "it is as if *I* were to ask *your* opinion on a point of common law."

Laurence Greatorex laughed, and drew his chair a few inches nearer.

"Well, Mr. Trefalden," he said, "I will be quite plain and open with you. Supposing, now, that I had good reason for believing that you could help me to the very thing of which I am in search, would it then be strange if I came to you as I have come to-day?"

"Certainly not; but"

"Excuse me—I *have* been told something that leads me to hope you can put a fine investment in my way, if you will take the trouble to do so."

"Then I regret to say that you have been told wrongly."

"But my informant"

"— was in error, Mr. Greatorex. I have nothing of the kind in my power—absolutely nothing."

"Is it possible?"

"So possible, Mr. Greatorex, that, had I five thousand pounds of my own to invest at this moment, I should be compelled to seek precisely such counsel as you have just been seeking from me."

The banker leaned across the table in such a manner as to bring his face within a couple of feet of Mr. Trefalden's.

"But what about the new Company?" said he.

The lawyer's heart seemed suddenly to stand still, and for a moment—just one moment—his matchless self-possession was shaken. He felt himself change colour. He scarcely dared trust himself to speak, lest his voice should betray him.

Greatorex's eyes flashed with triumph; but the lawyer recovered his presence of mind as quickly as he had lost it.

"Pardon me," he said, coldly; "but to what company do you allude?"

"To what company should I allude, except the one in which you have invested your cousin Saxon's money?"

Mr. Trefalden looked his questioner haughtily in the face.

"You labour under some mistake, Mr. Greatorex," he said. "In the first place, you are referring to some association with which I am unacquainted"

"But"

"And in the second place, I am at a loss to understand how my cousin's affairs should possess any interest for you."

"A first-rate speculation possesses the very strongest interest for me," replied the banker.

Mr. Trefalden shrugged his shoulders significantly.

"The law, perhaps, has made me over-cautious," said he; "but I abhor the very name of speculation."

"And yet, if I understood your cousin rightly, his money has been invested in a speculation," persisted Greatorex.

The lawyer surveyed his visitor with a calm hauteur that made Greatorex fidget in his chair.

"I cannot tell," said he, "how far my cousin, in his ignorance of money matters, may have unintentionally misled you upon this point; but I must be permitted to put you right in one particular. Saxon Trefalden has certainly not speculated with his fortune, because I should no more counsel him to speculate than he would speculate without my counsel. I trust I am sufficiently explicit."

"Explicit enough, Mr. Trefalden, but"

The lawyer looked up inquiringly.

"But disappointing, you see—confoundedly disappointing. I made sure, after what he had told me"

"May I inquire what my cousin did tell you, Mr. Greatorex?"

"Certainly. He said you had invested a large part of his property, and the whole of your own, in the shares of some new company, the name and objects of which were for the present to be kept strictly private."

"No more than this?"

"No more—except that it was to be the most brilliant thing of the day."

Mr. Trefalden smiled.

"Poor boy!" he said. "What a droll mistake—and yet how like him!"

Seeing him so unruffled and amused, the City man's belief in the success of his own scheme was momentarily staggered. He began to think he had made no such capital discovery after all.

"I hope you mean to share the joke, Mr. Trefalden," he said, uneasily.

"Willingly. As is always the case in these misapprehensions, Saxon was a little right and a good deal wrong in his story. His money has been *lent* to a company on first-rate security—not invested in shares, or embarked in any kind of speculation. I am not at liberty to name the company—it is sufficient that he could nowhere have found more satisfactory debtors."

"I suppose, then, there is no chance in the same direction for outsiders?"

"My cousin has advanced, I believe, as much as the company desires to borrow."

"Humph!—just my luck. Well, I am much obliged to you, Mr. Trefalden."

"Not in the least. I only regret that I can be of no service to you, Mr. Greatorex."

They rose simultaneously, and, as they did so, each read mistrust in the other's eyes.

"Does he really want an investment?" thought the lawyer; "or is it a mere scheme of detection from first to last?"

"Has he caught scent of my little game?" the banker asked himself; "and is this plausible story nothing, after all, but a clever invention?"

These, however, were questions that could not be asked, much less answered; so, Laurence Greatorex and William Trefalden parted civilly enough, and hated each other more heartily than ever.

There was one, however, who witnessed their parting, and took note thereof—one who marked the expression of the banker's face as he left the office, the look of dismay on William Trefalden's as he returned to his private room. That keen observer was Mr. Keckwitch; and Mr. Keckwitch well knew how to turn his quick apprehension to account.

CHAPTER LXXI. THE GREAT COMMERCIAL AUTHORITY.

The young men had no difficulty in finding the mansion of Mr. Melchisedek. It was a large, white, Oriental-looking house, with innumerable lattices, a fountain playing in the court-yard, and a crowd of Nubian and Egyptian servants in rich Eastern dresses lounging about the gates.

When Saxon inquired for the master of the house, a grave Armenian in a long dark robe and lofty cap stepped forward and conducted the visitors across the court-yard, through a long corridor, and into a small room furnished like a European counting-house. Here they were received by a gentlemanly person seated before a large desk covered with papers.

"Mr. Melchisedek, I presume?" said Saxon.

The gentleman at the desk smiled, and shook his head.

"I am Mr. Melchisedek's secretary," he replied. "At your service."

"I particularly wish to see Mr. Melchisedek himself," said Saxon, "if he will oblige me with five minutes' conversation."

The secretary smiled again; much as a vizier might smile at the request of a stranger who asked to see the sultan.

"If you will do me the favour to state the nature of your business," said he, "I will acquaint Mr. Melchisedek with the particulars. He may then, perhaps, grant you an interview."

So Saxon explained all about the inquiries which he was anxious to make, and the secretary, taking their cards with him, left the young men for a few minutes to themselves.

"The Commercial Authority seems to be a mighty man in the land," said Lord Castletowers.

"The Commercial Authority has a princely garden," replied Saxon, looking out of the window upon a maze of gorgeous flower-beds, clumps of sycamores and palms, and alleys of shadowy cypress-trees.

"Princely, indeed!" said the Earl; and quoted a line or two of Tennyson:

> "A realm of pleasaunce, many a mound,
> And many a shadow-chequer'd lawn
> Full of the city's stilly sound,
> And deep myrrh-thickets bowing round,
> The stately cedar, tamarisks,
> Thick rosaries of scented thorn,
> Tall orient shrubs, and obelisks
> Graven with emblems of the time,
> In honour of the golden prime
> Of good Haroun Alraschid!

—by the way, Trefalden, what if the Commercial Authority keeps the Persian girl 'with argent-lidded eyes' hidden up behind yonder lattices?"

At this moment the door softly re-opened, and, instead of the secretary, the Armenian appeared.

He bowed almost to the ground, and requested the effendis to follow him.

Up a broad flight of marble steps they went, and through a long suite of rooms magnificently furnished in a semi-Oriental style, with divans and hangings, carpets in which the foot sank noiselessly, statues, massive bronzes, ornamental clocks, and large paintings in heavy Italian frames. Having led them through five of these stately reception-rooms, the Armenian paused at the entrance to the sixth, held the velvet curtain aside, and stood back to let them pass.

A spacious room, still more Oriental, and, if possible, still more costly in its decorations, opened before them. The windows admitted the last crimson light of the setting sun. The air was heavy with a mixed perfume of orange-blossoms and roses, and the scented fumes of Turkish tobacco.

As the young men entered, a gaunt figure clothed all in white rose from a sofa at the upper end of the room, and stood to receive them.

This was Mr. Melchisedek.

The great Commercial Authority was, beyond doubt, a very extraordinary-looking individual. He was a Jew, pur et simple. It needed no ethnologist to see that. A Jew of marked Arabian type, with deep-set fiery eyes, a complexion almost the colour of a Roxburgh binding, a high, narrow, intellectual forehead, and a "sable-silvered" beard and moustache. He wore a crimson fez, and a suit of fine white linen, that shone all over like the richest satin. The buttons of his coat and waistcoat were also of linen; but in his shirt he wore three superb brilliants, and the long, slender brown hand which held his chibouque was all ablaze with jewels.

Handing this chibouque to one of four gorgeously attired Nubian slaves that stood behind his sofa, Mr. Melchisedek inclined his head, pointed to a couple of divans, and said, in the tone of a sovereign giving audience:

"Gentlemen, you are welcome."

Pipes and coffee were then brought round in the Eastern fashion, and for some minutes the trio smoked and sipped in silence.

Mr. Melchisedek was the first to speak.

"May I inquire," he said, "which gentleman I am to address as Mr. Trefalden?"

"Myself, if you please," replied Saxon, bluntly.

The Commercial Authority removed his pipe from his lips, and looked at him with some appearance of interest.

"I know your name well, Mr. Trefalden," he said. "You came lately into the possession of a fortune founded one hundred years ago."

"I did," replied Saxon, laughingly. "But I did not expect to find that fact known in Egypt."

"All remarkable financial facts are known among financial men," replied Mr. Melchisedek; "and the fame of the Trefalden legacy has been considerable."

Hereupon he resumed his pipe, and a second round of coffee made its appearance.

Saxon and Castletowers exchanged glances. The semi-Oriental gravity of the man, the peculiarities of his appearance, the pacha-like splendour of his palace, and the train of slaves about the place, amazed and amused them.

In obedience to a sign from the Earl, Saxon left Mr. Melchisedek to conduct the conversation according to his own pleasure.

Presently the Nubians removed the coffee-cups and brought round a silver bowl of rose-water, and three embroidered napkins. The guests dipped their fingers in the one, and dried them on the others. The slaves then closed the lattices, lit the lamps, and withdrew.

They were no sooner gone than Mr. Melchisedek turned to Saxon, and said:

"If I understand my secretary aright, Mr. Trefalden, you have been informed that a second Anglo-Indian Company, calling itself the New Overland Route Company, has lately been incorporated; and you wish to know whether that information be correct?"

"Not precisely," replied Saxon, "for I have reason to know that such a company has actually been formed; but"

"May I inquire what that reason is?" said Mr. Melchisedek.

"I have taken shares in it."

"Will you permit me to see your debentures?"

"I have none—that is to say, they are doubtless in the care of my lawyer. He takes charge of all my papers, and transacts all my business."

Mr. Melchisedek looked at Saxon with something like a grim smile hovering about the corners of his mouth, and said in his oracular tone:

"Sir, there is no such company."

"But"

"There is no such company. All joint-stock companies must be publicly registered as the act directs. They do not exist as companies till that registration has taken place, and, being registered, they become capable of legally carrying on the business for which they are formed, according to the provisions of their deeds of settlement. No such company as this New Overland Route Company has been registered in England or elsewhere—consequently, no such company exists."

Saxon changed colour, and was silent.

Mr. Melchisedek touched a silver bell, and the Armenian chamberlain presented himself upon the threshold.

"My volume of maps," said the master, laconically.

The Armenian vanished; but presently reappeared with a huge folio, which Mr. Melchisedek opened at the Eastern Hemisphere.

"Be so good, Mr. Trefalden," said he, "as to show me this supposititious route."

Saxon drew his finger along the map from Marseilles, through the Straits of Messina, to Sidon on the coast of Syria; from Sidon to Palmyra; from Palmyra along the valley of the Euphrates, down the Persian Gulf, and over to Bombay. He explained the scheme as he proceeded. It seemed so brilliant, so easy, so perfect, that before he came to the end of his commentary his tone of voice had become quite triumphant, and all his doubts had vanished.

But the great Commercial Authority only smiled again, more grimly than before.

"You have been grossly imposed upon, Mr. Trefalden," he said. "No offices such as you describe have been erected here or elsewhere. No surveyors have been sent out. No deputations have been despatched. The whole transaction is less than a bubble—a mere figment of the imagination."

"But may it not be possible that, without your knowledge"

"No Oriental undertaking can be set on foot without my knowledge," replied Mr. Melchi-

sedek, stiffly. "I employ agents throughout the East, whose business it is to keep me informed on these subjects."

"Good Heavens!" murmured Saxon. "I do not know how to believe it!"

"Besides," added the Commercial Authority, "the thing is impracticable."

"Why so?"

"In the first place, the obstacles to the Euphrates route by land are innumerable—perhaps altogether insurmountable. In the second place, Sidon, which is to this scheme what Alexandria is to the genuine route, is one of the most dangerous points of the Syrian coast."

"Is that possible?" exclaimed Saxon. "I have read of the harbour of Sidon in Homer—in the Bible—in ancient and mediæval history. Surely it is the seaport of Damascus?"

"It was," replied Mr. Melchisedek; "but it has not been a seaport for more than two hundred years. When the Emir Fakreddin defended his territory against the encroachments of Amurath the Fourth, he filled the harbour in order to prevent the Turkish fleet from approaching the town. Since that time no vessel of size has dared to attempt an entrance."

Saxon stood bewildered, with his eyes fixed upon the map.

"I fear you have been defrauded to a considerable extent," said Mr. Melchisedek, politely.

"To be defrauded is, I suppose, the lot of the ignorant," replied Saxon; "but it is not so much for the money that I care. It is for the—the"

"Precisely," said Mr. Melchisedek. "The swindle."

Saxon shrank from the word as if it stung him.

"I am very much obliged to you," he said, hastily.

"Pray do not name it, Mr. Trefalden. I am happy to have been useful to you."

And with this Mr. Melchisedek again touched the silver hand-bell, saluted his visitors in stately fashion, and remained standing till the Armenian had ushered them from his presence.

Back they went again, through the five magnificent rooms, down the marble staircase, now all ablaze with lamps of quaint and beautiful designs, and out across the spacious court-yard.

It was now dusk. A delicious breeze was blowing off the sea; the Frankish quarter was full of promenaders; and a band was playing in the great square, before the French Consulate.

But Saxon strode on towards the Hôtel de l'Europe, observing nothing; and Castletowers followed him silently. Not till they were again alone in their own sitting-room did he venture to break in upon his friend's meditations.

"I am afraid this is a bad business, Trefalden," he said.

"A terrible business!" replied Saxon, leaning moodily out of the window.

The Earl laid his hand upon the young follow's shoulder.

"Is your loss very heavy?" he asked, gently.

"Nearly half my fortune."

"Good Heavens, Trefalden!"

Saxon smiled bitterly.

"Yes," he replied; "it is a loss not to be counted by thousands, or tens of thousands, or hundreds of thousands—but millions. I have been robbed of two millions."

"But not irrecoverably robbed! You have the law to appeal to!"

"The law can do nothing for me," replied Saxon.

"The law can do everything, if one has prompt recourse to it. Supposing that these swindlers have fled, you can set a hundred detectives at their heels; you can hunt them down like vermin—you can"

"I tell you, Castletowers, I can do nothing," interrupted Saxon, impatiently.

"Why not?"

Saxon was silent.

"Who laid the scheme before you? Who sold you the forged shares?"

Still Saxon made no reply.

A foreboding of the truth flashed suddenly across Lord Castletowers' mind.

"Gracious powers!" he faltered. "Surely—it is not possible—can it be that Mr. Trefalden"

"Don't ask me!" said Saxon, passionately; "don't ask me!"

Then, breaking down all at once, he exclaimed:

"But oh, it's not the money, Castletowers! it's not the money that I grieve about!"

"I understand that," replied the Earl, scarcely less agitated than himself. "Who would have conceived that Mr. Trefalden could be so base?"

"My own kinsman—my friend whom I loved and trusted!"

"The friend whom we all trusted," said the Earl.

Saxon looked at him with an alarmed, almost an imploring, expression—opened his lips, as if to speak—checked himself, and turned away with a heavy sigh.

He had now no doubt that his cousin had wronged Lord Castletowers of that twenty-five thousand pounds; but he could not bring himself to say what he suspected. Besides, there was still a hope

At all events, he would wait—wait and think.

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AT THE BAR.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "A CRUISE UPON WHEELS," &c. &c.

CHAPTER XVIII. SOMETHING STRANGE.

THE outsides of our places of abode tell no tales. As we walk down a street in the silent night, and pass the dark shut-up houses that seem so quiet and secure, we forget how much may be going on in each one of them of which the outside gives no sort of indication. In one, there is sickness—deadly sickness—which can have but one termination. In another, the sufferer is writhing in intolerable pain—to-morrow, an eminent surgeon will arrive there to perform a terrible operation. His carriage will draw up here by the kerbstone, and he will go in at that door to do his fearful work. Here, again, is a house where care has taken up his abode, and the master lies awake thinking of his pecuniary difficulties, and of all those children who are to be provided for and brought up. That light in the window yonder comes from a room in which a young man is drawing his last consumptive breath; and that other further down, from the chamber of a young girl, who is to be married to-morrow, and who is sitting up to write to an especial friend the last letter which she will sign with her maiden name.

But not alone do the outsides of our houses fail to tell what is going on within. Even inside, the inhabitants of one room may be entirely ignorant of what is going on in another, and that other close at hand. You go to an inn to pass the night, everything looks bright and gay, the waiters bustle about to execute your commands, the gas is kindled in the corridors, the fire burns brightly in your bedroom. In the next chamber to yours there lies a dead body waiting for interment. Further down, in the same corridor, a newly-born child has just entered on the scene. You know nothing of these things. If matters are going well with you, and your mind is free, you sleep quietly, and enjoy your rest. If you have some personal trouble, you are restless and depressed, but it is not because of the death, or the birth, that you are despondent or cheerful.

So was it in the house in Beaumont-street. The night passed quietly, and the hours succeeded each other in undisturbed silence; and then the dull, cold, London morning came, with a stillness, at first, almost greater than that of night, and showing a surprising emptiness in the street, which also wore a curious bare-swept look, which it had not at other times.

The policeman, in his beat, came to the corner of Beaumont-street, and looked up it and down it, and slowly smote his gloved hands together, for it was somewhat cold. He was not wanted. There was nothing going on, and there were no servant-maids about at this time to talk to. A very ill-looking cat was picking its steps across the street. He looked, and was, a bad subject, no doubt; a cat which was up all night as a habit, and made unearthly noises under people's windows. But it was impossible to take him up for that, so the policeman only clapped his hands louder than before to startle the beast, which, however, he did not succeed in doing, the cat being a wily London one, and a sufficiently accurate judge of distances to know that the policeman was too far off to do him an injury. If it had been a boy with a stone, I don't say—that would have been different.

The policeman and the cat—types, respectively, of order and disorder, of respectability and scampishness—had the street to themselves at this time. Soon they had both disappeared, the cat down his own area steps, the policeman round the corner on the way to other parts of his beat, and the street was bare again. Then an empty cab came rumbling and rattling along on its way to the stables, the horse dead-beat, stumbling at every step, the driver more than half asleep, but mechanically giving the reins a jerk at every stumble. After this, there was total stagnation again, till the inevitable little man, who is going somewhere early, appeared. Of course, he came, as he always does, briskly up the area steps of one of the houses, closing the gate carefully after him, stepping along with exceeding briskness and cheerfulness, and carrying a small, glazed, black bag in his hand. He was, in due time, succeeded by a servant of early habits, who opened the door of one of the houses, and, throwing the door-mat out upon the steps, retired once more within the house. This is a proceeding much favoured by the sisterhood, and is suggestive of vigorous cleansings to be carried on inside. Perhaps, it does instead of them.

By the time that the early servant has executed this performance, the day, though still in its infancy, may be said to have begun. More early servants soon begin to throw out more door-

mats, whilst some of the tribe will take to banging one of these useful objects against the area railings quite viciously, as if it was a "missus." The street is for some time now quite in the hands of the early domestics, who, speedily abandoning that first mat, retire within and bring out other specimens of the same kind, which they fling upon the pavement, hang upon the area spikes, and subject generally to every kind of ignominious treatment. The maids-of-all-work do not labour much at this time, the misuses being in bed, but are given to looking about them, to gazing up at the windows of their own residences to make sure that the blinds of their oppressors are still drawn down, and to congregating in twos and threes at the different house doors, discussing their wrongs and the best ways of redressing their respective grievances.

This is the time when there is more business done on the ground floor than we, who are upstairs, and asleep, have any idea of; and pleasure, as well as business, is the occupation of that hour. The distributors of milk, undisturbed by conscientious scruples in connexion with the diluted nature of the article in which they deal, are generally men of cheerful manners, and brilliant conversational powers, and these are on their rounds now, and ready to make themselves agreeable. Then there is the gentleman who represents the pig-wash interest, and to whom the thrifty handmaid looks not only for light gossip, but for solid remuneration. He is a splashy individual this, his cart is small and rickety, and his horse is diminutive, and lean, and crestfallen, but he is popular, nevertheless, for he brings money, and money is another word for ribbons. Lastly, comes the policeman, and he is always welcome.

Since the policeman was last in the street, the thoroughfare has altered considerably in appearance. Then he and the disreputable cat had it all to themselves. Since that time the street has come to life. When he was here a little while ago there was nobody to speak to; now there is an embarras de richesse in his way. He does what he can, however, and is not unsuccessful in pleasing.

A man, bearing the appearance of a navigator, has come into the street armed with a pickaxe and a crow. This individual pitches upon a particular paving-stone, which looks like all the rest, but to whose disadvantage the labouring man seems to know something, for he proceeds, keeping his eye steadily fixed upon it, to relieve himself of his coat and waistcoat, depositing which on the kerb, he flies at the doomed paving stone, and loosening it with his pick, has it out of its place in no time. Then he becomes suddenly inactive, and falls to feeling his arms, and looking about him. He has taken possession, and that is enough. Towards this personage the policeman makes his way, slowly and with dignity, in order to question him upon his projects with regard to the paving stone.

The two stand talking together for some time. They are stationed nearly opposite to the house occupied by the Penmores, which the policeman eyes from time to time, as it is his habit to eye everything. He observes that the inhabitants of the house are up and doing; but that the house itself wears rather a disordered aspect, some of the shutters being open, whilst others remain closed, and others again are half shut up. No movement is being made to arrange these matters in a more orderly manner, nor indeed are there any signs of movement or life about the house at all, till suddenly the street door opens, and Mr. Penmore, with a countenance expressive of great agitation and distress, appears upon the door-step, and stands there a moment, apparently uncertain which way to turn. The policeman knows Mr. Penmore by sight, having often lighted him with his lantern when Gilbert has been letting himself into the house late at night.

Penmore, seeing the policeman, comes across to him at once, and, with every indication of extreme haste in his voice and appearance, says:

"Where can I find a doctor?"

"Well, sir," the policeman began slowly, "it depends upon what kind of doctor——"

"Oh, quick, quick! Any doctor—that is, who understands his business."

"There is Dr. Giles, sir. He's medical attendant to the force; he's——"

"Where, where? there's not a moment to lose!"

"Close by, in Henry-street—first house round the corner. Is anything the matter, sir?"

But Gilbert is gone, and the last question is addressed to the empty air.

"Seems as if there was," says the navigator, answering the policeman's inquiry.

"I shouldn't wonder," replies this last, with the quick perception peculiar to his class, "if there wasn't somebody ill."

We have been outside the house long enough. It is time that we should look within, and ascertain what it is that has brought Mr. Penmore out so early in search of medical help.

While Gilbert was busy in his dressing-room at an early hour, he became suddenly aware that something unusual was going on in the house.

There was the sound of hurried footsteps moving hither and thither, of the banging of doors, of the voices of persons talking eagerly, but in suppressed tones, and then of some one hastening along the passage outside Penmore's door, and uttering a kind of sobbing sound, intermingled with various ejaculations of dismay and bewilderment. Presently these sounds ceased for a moment, and there was a hurried knocking at the dressing-room door.

"Yes—what is it—what's the matter?" asked Penmore.

"Oh, sir," answered the servant, Charlotte, breathlessly, "you're wanted—directly."

Gilbert opened the door.

"What is the matter?" he asked, seriously alarmed.

"Oh, sir, Miss Carrington—she's—she's——"

"What?" cried Gilbert.

"Oh, sir, she's DEAD!"

"Dead!—Miss Carrington—what do you mean?"

"I mean that, sir—that she's dead."

At this moment Gabrielle came out of her room just in time to hear the announcement. She and her husband exchanged one look of consternation, and both, without a word, ascended the stairs that led to Miss Carrington's room.

At the door Gabrielle paused. She laid her hand upon her husband's arm, to detain him.

"Oh, Gilbert," she ejaculated, "what can this mean?"

Her husband shook his head, and, pausing for a moment to press her hand reassuringly, softly turned the handle of the door, and entered the room, Gabrielle following him.

One glance told them both that they were in the presence of Death.

The room was darkened, and in considerable disorder. Everything was as it had been left overnight, or pushed aside in the morning confusion. The chair on which Miss Carrington had been seated when Gabrielle last saw her was in the same spot. The small table on which the supper-tray had been placed was drawn up beside it. Articles of apparel were scattered here and there, and the dressing-gown which Miss Carrington had worn on the previous night lay on the great arm-chair. The embers of the fire that had died out still encumbered the grate.

Another fire had died out that night, or during the long morning which followed it. On the bed placed against the wall in the middle of the room—and this was orderly arranged at least—lay the body of Diana Carrington. Already the limbs had been composed by loving hands, which were even now finishing the pious work. The servant was rendering the last service to the mistress whom she had loved—the last homage which one human being can offer to another.

It has not been our fortune in this narrative to see much of the good side of either of these two, but we have seen enough to feel sure that at least they were attached to each other.

On the features of the dead lady there was set that stamp which gives a dignity of its own to every face on which it is impressed—the stamp of death. No one could look upon that countenance and bear malice, or remember wrong or indignity. The majesty of death was there, and Gabrielle felt it, as she stood and gazed upon the corpse from a distance, and alone.

Alone, for her husband, after one hasty glance at the dead woman, had whispered hurriedly that he would go to seek a medical man, and had left the room, while as to her who was still engaged about the body, she was at present too much absorbed in her awful task to make Gabrielle's solitude less isolated. Indeed, for the time, this woman seemed unconscious that she was not alone in the room. Great gasping sobs burst from her as she proceeded with her work, and the tears, like an extreme unction of love, fell fast upon her mistress's body.

She had been the nurse of the woman who lay there dead, and she had carried her in her arms and ministered to her so incessantly and carefully, that she had got to look upon her as a daughter, and to love her with that sort of fierce affection which belonged to her tigerish nature. The work she was now engaged in was congenial to her, and she would have died herself rather than have allowed another to do it. No hands but hers for *that* work.

And Gabrielle stood and looked on, hardly knowing what she had best do. She was afraid to come forward lest she should seem to intrude, while she felt as if to remain still was to appear unfeeling and almost insensible. At last her kind nature settled the question. This woman's sorrow touched her heart, and she made a step or two forward, intending to speak some words of sympathy and kindness.

Her first movement seemed to disturb Jane Cantanker at her work, and she turned hastily round. The very tears seemed to dry up in her eyes as she looked at Gabrielle, and as she stood between her and her dead mistress.

"Keep back," she said, in a hoarse voice. "You shall not come nigh her. What do you want here at all?"

Gabrielle's consternation was utter. She was not prepared for this. Such fierce anger, and in the very presence of the dead, too.

"I only came because I thought I might be of some use, or some comfort, at any rate?" she said.

"Comfort! What do you mean by comfort?" cried the woman, still standing before the bed in a menacing attitude. "I hate the sight of you, I tell you. What right have you to come into the room where *she* is? It's insulting the dead. I wonder you have the boldness to do it. But I'll be revenged upon you yet. I know something, and I'll be avenged, and so shall *she*, poor lamb," she added, pointing to the corpse. "I've watched you, watched you closely, and I know what's been in your mind this long time, with your quiet, creeping ways, and I know, too, what's been in *my* mind, and what's there still, mind you."

The woman had changed. There was nothing of the ridiculous about her now. She was a Fury, a Sybil of old denouncing vengeance. We have laughed at Jane Cantanker before now, but there was no laughing at this. It was too dreadful.

"What hand have you had in this?" the furious woman broke out again, and pointing once more to the dead body. "Yes, you may well start. What have you had to do with it? You hated her, you know you did. You thought she wronged you, and you hated her according. And now she's dead, and you think yourself revenged; but who's to revenge her, think you? Oh, you shall hear of it again, whatever you may think, and that quickly."

This scene, so sudden, so unexpected, so terrible, was almost too much for Gabrielle. She trembled, and her knees shook under her.

"I don't understand you. I don't know what you mean," she said. "You must be mad."

"Oh, you'll know what I mean soon enough. I'm strong and you're weak, and you'll know what it is to have a woman against you that's strong enough, and resolute enough, and obstinate enough, if you like it better, to go through anything. We wasn't given to liking everybody, neither she nor I, but we did care for each other, I tell you. Oh, poor dear, poor dear," cried the mourner, throwing herself down by the bed and bursting into tears. "I'm all alone now, and I've nobody to care for in the world."

It was a dreadful sight, this anger and sorrow mingled together, to which the poor wretch gave way. Gabrielle felt that this was no time to bandy words with the woman, or to take notice of expressions uttered in the madness of a first sorrow. What had been said was incomprehensible, but this was not the time to ask for an explanation. So she took the opportunity of this burst of grief to steal noiselessly out of the room, and going down stairs into the little room on the ground floor, sat there with the door open listening for what might come next.

She had not sat so long, before she heard the house door opened swiftly from without, and then the sound of footsteps passing hastily along the passage and up the stairs.

She stole out just in time to see her husband and a strange gentleman ascending the staircase.

The strange gentleman was the doctor.

CHAPTER XIX. GABRIELLE'S DANGER.

The doctor, in company with Mr. Penmore, went up-stairs and entered the room where his services were required, with a soft professional tread. Jane Cantanker was still there, seated by the side of the bed. She had put the room in some sort of order and partly closed the shutters, and then she had sat down to wait and watch.

Doctor Giles, physician by appointment to the police force, was a gentleman of skill and penetration. Accustomed by the very nature of his function to deal with exceptional cases, accustomed to see death in its more violent and sudden phases. One glance at the form which lay there upon the bed, told him that his utmost skill could be of no service here, and that the duty which he had to perform was to the dead, and not to the living. He went, however, through the accustomed formalities. He felt for the pulse which beat no longer, he listened for the action of the heart which had ceased to palpitate. He lifted the eyelid which the woman who stood beside him had piously closed, and he placed a small mirror before the mouth and nostrils, and scrutinised it eagerly for any trace of mist or vapour which might have come upon its polished surface. There was no such thing. This formula gone through, Dr. Giles, with mechanical orderliness, hung up the looking-glass on its nail, and, drawing Penmore aside into one of the windows, spoke thus:

"It is all over."

Gilbert bowed his head. "So I feared," he answered.

"Have you any idea as to the cause of death?" asked the doctor.

"None whatever."

"That must be looked into later," said Dr. Giles.

"By all means," replied Gilbert. "How long do you think she has been dead?"

The doctor went back to the bedside, and Gilbert followed him.

"There is still," said the doctor, "some slight degree of warmth underneath the body and on the crown of the head, always the last place which the vital heat deserts. She has not been dead very long."

These words seemed to put the fact of the death before the dead lady's servant with new reality, and she sobbed with a revived passionateness.

"Who is this?" whispered the doctor to Gilbert.

"She was the lady's servant," answered Penmore, "and was, I believe, much attached to her mistress."

Doctor Giles waited till the woman's grief had in a measure subsided, and then he spoke to her:

"You were in the service of the deceased lady?"

"Yes, sir," sobbed the woman.

"Were you with her at the time of her death?"

"No, sir. Poor dear—I wish I had been! When I came in this morning she was lying quite still, and almost as you see her now, and I let her be awhile, thinking she must have had a bad night, and was making up for it now."

"Was she in the habit of having bad nights?" asked the doctor.

"Sometimes, sir, she was very fitful-like about her sleep; and, sometimes, she'd do nothing but sleep, and doze even in the daytime, as well as the night; and, at other times, she'd be constantly restless and wakeful."

"And, on this particular morning, you thought she'd passed one of these more wakeful nights?" inquired Doctor Giles.

"Yes, sir; and, as I said, I let her be a bit; and then I looked towards her again, and something scared me about the look of her face, and the jaw dropped open, that wasn't her habit; and then I went up nearer, and found—found her as you see."

"And you have no knowledge of any illness under which this lady may have been suffering, and which might have caused her death?" asked the doctor.

"No, sir, I have not."

"Had she any regular medical attendant?"

"No, sir; that is to say, not in London. Her last medical attendant was Doctor Hood, of Woodford."

Doctor Giles made a note of the name and address. He took out his card at the same time,

and placed it on the chimney-piece: "In case I am wanted," he said.

"I suppose," said Mr. Penmore, "that it will be desirable to make some examination as to the cause of death."

"Oh, undoubtedly," answered the doctor, "in the course of this afternoon."

As if this had suggested something to him, the doctor turned round again as he was about to leave the room, and, addressing Jane Cantanker, said:

"What food did the lady partake of last?"

"She had her supper sent up as usual, sir—a couple of eggs and some stout. She hardly ate anything, though."

"Did she drink the stout?"

"Yes, sir, every drop."

The doctor was silent for a little while, and stood looking at the corpse, as if he were revolving something in his mind. Presently, he stooped down, and, opening the lips of the dead lady, smelt them very carefully, as well as the mouth, which he also opened. This lasted some time; it seemed as if he had a difficulty in satisfying himself.

"There is a smell of opium," he said.

A movement of surprise, on the part of Gilbert and Cantanker, followed this announcement.

"Was your mistress in the habit of taking opium, do you know?" asked the doctor, addressing Jane Cantanker.

"No, sir—certainly not, that I'm aware of."

"There is no doubt about the smell," continued the doctor. "You can judge for yourself," he added to Gilbert.

Penmore bent over the body as the doctor had done. "The smell is there, decidedly," he answered.

"I will return by-and-by," said Doctor Giles, "with an experienced surgeon of my acquaintance, and we will proceed to a further investigation. Meanwhile, do not let the body be touched or disturbed in any way."

"Will it be necessary to have an inquest?" asked Penmore, who had, as we all have, a dread of that kind of inquiry.

"I cannot tell," answered the doctor, "till the examination I have spoken of has taken place. After that, you shall know at once. And now," he continued, "I must leave you for a short time, but I will return when I have secured the assistance of my friend, and made what preparations are necessary." And, so saying, the doctor went out of the room, attended by Mr. Penmore, and left the house as quietly as he had entered it. But not before he had once more repeated the caution: "Be very sure that no one meddles at all with the body, or attempts to cleanse the mouth or lips, while I am away."

Penmore went into the little parlour as soon as the doctor was gone, and found his wife waiting eagerly to hear what the medical authority had said.

"I am afraid," said Gilbert, after relating what had taken place, and how the doctor's suspicions had been awakened by the smell of opium, "I am so afraid that it will be thought necessary to have an inquest."

"Oh!" cried Gabrielle, whom the word frightened terribly, "I hope not. Why, surely that can't be necessary. It implies suspicion, doesn't it?"

"Well, not precisely. It simply implies that there are circumstances connected with the death which require to be investigated."

"Why, Gilbert," said his wife, "surely there can't be anything of the sort. I thought such things only took place in dreadful neighbourhoods, and where deeds of violence and crime were common."

"An inquest may be held anywhere where a death takes place which cannot be perfectly accounted for to the satisfaction of the medical attendant who is called in."

Poor Mrs. Penmore's mind was greatly disturbed by this dreadful word "inquest." There was something terrible to her about the idea of being thus brought into actual contact with part of the machinery organised by the government of the country as a means of detecting and punishing crime. What a dreadful chance was this which had brought such a possibility, even, so near them. The events of this long morning (and it seemed a week since the moment of the first alarm) were surely bad enough already, without this new thing to make it worse.

"It surely cannot be necessary," said Gabrielle.

"I hope it may not prove so," replied her husband. "I own that I should be very much annoyed if it were considered necessary."

And now Gabrielle had to tell her husband of that distressing interview which had taken place in the room up-stairs between herself and Jane Cantanker. Coming upon her so soon after that first shock caused by the death, this scene had shaken and disturbed her sadly, and it was a comfort to her to speak of it to Gilbert, and the more so as he seemed disposed to view the whole thing as simply ridiculous.

"You did quite right," he said, "not to bandy words with her about such folly. She is made up of spite and venom, and would only be too glad, no doubt, to do either of us a mischief if she could. I believe, too, that she is really made almost frantic with grief by this miserable business."

"I think she was really attached to her mistress," said Gabrielle, "and her mistress to her."

"Not a doubt of it," replied Gilbert. "They had the attraction for each other of being both—— however, I won't say that," he added, interrupting himself. "And so my little timid woman is to be called a murderess?" he continued. "Well, you don't look much like it, at any rate."

And now it became necessary to think what friends or relatives of the deceased lady it would be right to communicate with. Penmore knew of no relations nearer, or indeed so near, as himself. His mother, who had been her father's first cousin, had long been dead, and now the

late Mrs. Penmore's children were next of kin to the children of Mrs. Penmore's first cousin. There were some remoter cousins yet, with whom Miss Carrington had resided before she came to live in London, and to these Gilbert wrote at once, announcing what had happened, and inviting any member of the family who might be disposed to do so, to come up and look into the deceased lady's affairs. He wrote also to her solicitor to the same effect. After this, it was necessary for him to go out in order to find some one who could relieve him for a day or two of certain pressing duties which for the time it would be impossible for him to attend to.

When Dr. Giles and Gilbert Penmore left the room up-stairs, after the doctor's useless visit had been paid, the servant, Jane Cantanker, remained behind. She sat herself down by the bedside, and began thinking, and, to judge by appearances, her thoughts were of a dark and dangerous complexion. Those words which the doctor had let drop at last, seemed to have made a powerful impression upon her, for, after thinking awhile, she also knelt down by the bedside, and made an attempt to detect that smell of opium of which the medical authority had spoken with so much confidence. "I don't know what the smell of opium is," she said to herself; "but that there is the smell of some medical stuff or other there, is beyond the shadow of a doubt."

Then she got up and began to pace the room up and down, and then, as if suddenly remembering something, she stopped short, and going to the chimney-piece, took up the card which it will be remembered the doctor placed there, and perused it carefully. After that, she resumed her pacing of the room once more, and then she opened the door softly and left the room. She came back in a minute or two, having put on her bonnet and shawl in the mean time, and went up to the chimney-piece, and once more read the address upon the card, and that done, and having looked round again at the bed and what lay upon it, she finally left the apartment.

She went down stairs, and out of the house, and proceeded along the street, looking up at all the corners, as if in search of some particular turning. At last she came to one which was inscribed Henry-street. Here she paused, and, after looking about her once more, went up to a house which had a coloured lamp over the door, and two bells, one over the other, marked respectively "Night" and "Surgery." She gave a smart pull at this last, and the door was presently opened by a tall, pale young man, with a blotchy countenance and a depressed appearance, who responded to her inquiry, "Whether Dr. Giles was at home," by simply holding the door back, and making a sign to her to enter, but without speaking a word.

Miss Cantanker, availing herself of this silent invitation, went into the house, and passed through a small door at once into the surgery. There was an inner glass door in this apartment, which was labelled "Consulting Room." But though the door was glazed, as to its upper half, there was a muslin curtain on the other side of it, so that no one could see through to the room within. There was a dim sound of voices coming from this apartment.

"Dr. Giles is engaged for the moment," said the sorrowful-looking gentleman; "but if you'll sit down for a minute or two, he won't be long," and with that the young assistant returned to the preparation of a mixture, of which "two tablespoonfuls were to be taken every four hours," with great zest and assiduity.

Miss Cantanker watched him as he went on with the preparation, hardly knowing that she did so. Yet if she had been examined afterwards, she could have told to how many of the bottles on the different shelves he had had recourse, how large a dose he had got out of each, and what were the colours of the different liquids which were used. She had registered these things in her mind without there being the least necessity for doing so, and almost unconsciously; for there was present to her mind all the time a certain upper-room, not far off, with a bed in it, and *something* lying on the bed. The surgery, with its bottles, and its pestle and mortar, its glass door, and its umbrella-stand, she saw too; but her sense of sight took in these much as our sense of hearing takes in the accompaniment to a sad song whose words are all the time riveting our attention whether we will or not.

By-and-by the glass door was opened, and a policeman, hard as a nail and stiff as a poker, came from within, accompanied by the doctor. Curiously they had just been engaged in talking about an inquest, of all things in the world.

"It will take place at four o'clock, sir," said the policeman, "if that will be convenient to you."

"Oh yes," said the doctor, "that'll do. By-the-by," he added, as his eye fell upon the figure of Cantanker, "I think most likely that the coroner will have to open another before long in Beaumont-street."

The policeman had nothing to do with unofficial communications of this sort, so he stiffly took his departure without another word, and the doctor, bustling back, intimated to Miss Cantanker that he was at liberty now to hear anything that she might have to communicate to him, and he led the way into the consulting-room.

"It is the servant who lives at the house inhabited by that angelic woman Mrs. Penmore," said the assistant, pausing as the door closed in the act of making up a black draught.

The young man was susceptible and sentimental, and he had seen Gabrielle in his professional excursions about the neighbourhood, and respectfully adored her.

Meanwhile, on the other side of the glass door, a conversation, which was likely to be fraught with serious consequences, was being carried on between Jane Cantanker and the police doctor.

"I have called," said the former, "in conse-

quence of something which dropped from you, when you were round at our place this morning. Your suspicions seemed to be aroused by that smell of opium which you were able to discover upon my poor mistress's lips?"

"Eh, what! you think there's been foul play, do you? Ah, well, I'm not surprised."

Surprised! No, indeed. That must be a strange case of iniquity, indeed, that could surprise Dr. Giles, surgeon to the police force. Squalor, crime, deceit, and concealment formed the very atmosphere in which this man lived. Yet he had not become a hard man either. Only he could not be astonished. He was bankrupt as to that original stock-in-trade of surprise with which we all start in life pretty well provided.

"I don't wish to say anything about 'foul play,' sir, as yet," said Cantanker; "only there is circumstances connected with the case which I am free to own have awakened my suspicions, and which I should wish to communicate to you immediate."

"Well, my good lady, and what are those?" inquired the doctor, taking up a pen ready to make notes of her answers.

"Well, sir, in the first place. The lady of the house in which my poor mistress was living was not on good terms with my mistress."

"Ay, ay, ay," ejaculated the doctor, making a note.

"They had had a regular quarrel on the very day preceding her death, and Mrs. Penmore had gone so far as to say that my poor mistress was 'not fit to live.'"

The doctor pursed up his lips and wrote again.

"But now comes the most suspicious part of all, sir," Cantanker went on. "It is my custom—or rather it *was* my custom—to take up my mistress's supper—poor dear thing—every night into her room. Well, sir, on this particular evening, just as I was preparing the meal, down comes Mrs. Penmore into the kitchen, which she never did before in the evening, and begs and entreats me to give up my usual practice, and to let her take up my poor lady's supper that once. Sir, I resisted and refused her over and over again, but she went on persisting, and cajoling, and saying that she wanted to make her peace with my mistress after what had occurred in the afternoon—meaning the quarrel between them—in short, she was that persevering, that at last I gave way, though very unwilling, and she actually took the tray out of my hands, though—you must know—smiling all the time in play-like, and carried it up-stairs.

"Sir, I stood and listened at the bottom of the stairs, for I couldn't rightly understand it all, and I heard her stop and turn into a room on the first floor, my mistress's apartments being on the second. She went into this room, tray and all, and stayed there some time, and then she came out and continued ascending the stairs, but slowly, and in a hesitating way like. She seemed to stop outside the door, too, for a short time, and then she knocked and went in."

"She might have stopped outside to get breath, you know," said the doctor. "There is nothing in that."

"Well, sir, I tell you what happened just as it *did* happen," replied Cantanker.

"Tell me," said Doctor Giles, after thinking a little while, "what did this supper consist of? What was there on the tray?"

"There was two eggs lightly poached on toast and a jug of stout."

"Did any remains of those articles come down?" asked the doctor.

"The eggs, sir, was nearly untouched, but the stout was all drunk."

The next question was put very earnestly and quickly:

"Have you preserved what came down?"

"Sir, I have not. As to the eggs, feeling a slight sinking, I ate them myself. For the stout, it was all gone as I have said."

"And has the jug been washed out?"

"Yes, sir, it has, and is as clean as when it was made."

"Ah, that's unfortunate. You did not feel any ill effects after eating the eggs?"

"I had a severe heartburn in the night, sir; but to that I am accustomed, as it gnaws at me pretty well every night of my life."

"And when were your suspicions first excited?" inquired the doctor.

"Directly my poor mistress died, sir. I thought then of the quarrel, and of Mrs. Penmore's anxiety to take the supper-tray up, and putting all together, I began to suspect. For I knew what sort of terms they'd both been on almost ever since my mistress entered the house, and how my poor lady was no favourite with Mrs. Penmore, nor never had been."

The doctor sat and reflected again, biting the top of his pen, and looking in an absent manner at Jane Cantanker.

"It is a pity," he said, at last, "that you washed out that jug."

"There is another circumstance connected with it that I should wish to mention," remarked the woman.

"Yes, and what is that?"

"My mistress, when I went up-stairs to take down the supper-tray, objected very strongly to the stout, and said that it was the nastiest she had ever tasted."

"She said that, did she?" asked the doctor, shrewdly. "That's very important!" And he made a note of it forthwith.

"Well," said the doctor, rising—for his large experience of persons of Miss Cantanker's class had taught him that they never know when to go, and always stop where they are till the propriety of a move is suggested to them from without—"I suppose there is nothing more to be said now, and I will come round and proceed to the necessary investigations this afternoon."

And with that he brought the interview to a close, and, after escorting his visitor to the door, went back to the surgery, and to a snug

mutton-chop, which was always ready for him about this time.

Meanwhile, Miss Cantanker returned at the top of her speed, and entered the house modestly by the kitchen entrance. There was something of secresy now about all her actions.

STARTING THE RIO GRANDE RAILWAY.

Our scheme was an excellent one. A more "taking" prospectus was never printed east of Temple-bar. There were originally but two promoters of the undertaking, Wilson and myself; but, as will be seen presently, we admitted a third party into partnership with us. We were both—Wilson and myself—barristers, but barristers without briefs, and with no money to speak of. The long vacation was approaching, the heat of London made the Temple and Fleet-street no longer bearable, and yet we had not the means to leave town. Something had to be done. The sum total of my worldly wealth was two pounds six and fourpence, nor was I likely to receive any money until Michaelmas-day. Wilson was still poorer, for he had changed his last sovereign. We neither of us owed much; but, to remain behind every one after the world had fled from town, was intolerable. Failing every other resource, we determined to start a joint-stock company, of which I was to be the secretary, Wilson the general manager, and the two of us together were to be the joint promoters.

For a long time we hesitated whether we should start a bank, a financial company, a new mine, or a railway. We decided in favour of a railway. But in what part of the world? Europe was out of the question; and, after sending for one of the first prospectus writers in the City, we invested every shilling of our own ready money in a prospectus for "The Rio Grande and Mexico Grand Junction Railway Company," on the "limited liability" principle. The amount of capital we fixed to be five millions sterling, divided into two hundred and fifty thousand shares of twenty pounds each, of which, as we announced, only five pounds was to be called up for the present.

It may be asked what made us fix upon the Rio Grande as the place where our imaginary railway was to be constructed. All I can say in reply is, that one spot seemed quite as good as another to set up a concern which was really never to have life, except what it derived from the printed prospectus. Nevertheless, we chose to say that a railway was very much wanted from the banks of the Rio Grande to the city of Mexico, and that the two first sections of the line would be commenced directly. If any one attacked us and tried to prove that no railway was wanted in this region, we should sue him for libel. Besides, we knew we were quite safe in every way. In England—on the Stock Exchange, and in the open market for shares—speculation has got to such a pace, that it does not care one iota whether an undertaking will eventually pay or not. Who now applies for shares as an investment? Provided the concern will rise to a premium, who cares what is its eventual fate? To make it rise to this needful premium, all that is necessary is to have, or make people believe you have, men of influence and wealth connected with it. It is rather a nuisance, indeed, to have a really legitimate undertaking to praise up. It takes away half the zest of speculation. Like some of the hunting men of the present day—who often declare that hounds are rather in the way than otherwise, and that the pace would be all the better if they had not to think of dogs or fox—the great mass of speculators in England never dream of inquiring whether the concern is good or bad, provided always that it pays.

We set to work. Our first business was to get up a board of directors. This we—or rather I, for the experience in the preliminary part of the undertaking was mine, not Wilson's*—resolved to do by a judicious admixture of the City and the West-end. I was wise enough to know that as there is nothing which your regular business man likes so well as having anything to do with a title, so lords, honourables, baronets, knights, landed gentry, generals, admirals, colonels, and so forth, always believe themselves to be quite safe when associated with City men.

There had been with me at Cambridge (for I am an A.M. of Trin: Coll: Cam:) a certain Honourable Francis George Albert Coburg Dunstraw, captain and lieutenant-colonel in the Guards, with whom I had kept up a nodding intimacy. His lordship had more than once dined with me at the Oxford and Cambridge, and I had partaken of his hospitality at the Rag, of which, unlike most Guardsmen, he was a member. He was by no means a fast man, although he enjoyed life, and had everything of the best that could be had. His income was large, and his father's savings had left him quite enough ready money to get through the process of what is called sowing wild oats, to almost an unlimited extent.

I went to his lordship, and frankly explained what I wanted. I promised that his name should not appear on the printed prospectus of the company, unless seven or eight more respectable persons, whose names should be submitted to him, could be published at the same time. I also informed him, what was really the case, that he would not be liable for more than the shares which he actually subscribed for, and that, even as a director of the company, I would not ask him to put down his name for more than twenty-five shares, which, at ten pounds each, would only be two hundred and fifty pounds, even if he lost everything. I did not mention the subject of profit to him, for I knew he did not care for that, and that if he consented to become a director, it would be solely out of kindness to me, and not with a

* See Bank of Patagonia, vol. xiii., page 485.

view of making money. He was difficult to persuade, but, after two or three interviews, I obtained from him the following written, although conditional agreement to do what I wanted.

36, Enfield-square, W.,
London, 8th July, 1865.

I hereby agree to become a Director, and the Chairman of "The Rio Grande and Mexico Grand Junction Railway Company (Limited)," on the following conditions:

1st. Not less than seven other gentlemen must have agreed to become members of the Board.

2nd. The names of these gentlemen must be submitted to me before my name is published in the prospectus.

3rd. If I object to any of the other names, I am at liberty to cancel this agreement.

4th. I will agree to qualify myself by subscribing for twenty-five shares.

5th. I will not be responsible for any part of the preliminary expenses.

6th. If my name is published in the prospectus, with my written consent, I agree to remain Chairman and a Director of the Board for at least one year from the time the shares are allotted, and not to sell any portion of my twenty-five shares during that time.

(*Signed*) Dunstraw.

What more could I ask? Armed with this letter, I set off eastward on the following day, taking with me a note of introduction to Mr. Wood, one of our City financial magnates, whose touch appeared to turn everything into gold. Mr. Wood was a vulgar and a proud man. He had an office, speculated largely in every kind of share, stock, and scrip, and was universally respected as one on whom Mammon had showered her choicest favours. He had not begun life penniless, as is the boast of some men who now own their hundreds of thousands. His father had left him a respectable and lucrative haberdasher's shop in the west of England; but he had soon taken to speculating, and by degrees had made such large profits, that he sold all he had in the country, and settled in London. He was not easy to get upon the board of any company was Wood. He had been offered untold sums—in shares, of course—to come upon the direction of many new undertakings, but he had refused all save three or four good concerns.

But Wood had his price. Money could not have bought him, but title could. He had been always unfortunate in his attempts to get into what he called the circles of Haristocracy—chiefly perhaps from the great liberties he took with the letter H. I knew my man, and felt sure of him. The only person with a handle to his name he could even bow to, was Sir James Cider, a retired Indian judge, who snubbed poor Wood most unmercifully whenever he met him, but who was "Yes, Sir Jamesed," "No, Sir Jamesed," "Do you really think so, Sir James?" upon every possible occasion, until the unfortunate knight declared he would rather be back in the Supreme Court of Bombay than have to undergo two hours of any dinner-table at which Wood was present.

I was received ungraciously enough; for my introduction was from one not much gifted with this world's wealth, the curate of a West-end parish, who had been at Trinity with me, and whose previous curacy was close to Mr. Wood's place down in Essex. But when I opened out my business, and said I had come to ask him to sit as a director of the Rio Grande and Mexico Grand Junction Railway Company, he almost turned purple with rage. *He* join a company of which not one director was named yet? No, indeed, not if he knew it. At last, without giving him time to turn me out of the room, I said that the Earl of Dunstraw had agreed to join the board conditionally. His manner changed at once, first to astonishment, and then to almost civility. "Dunstraw!" said he; "highly respectable man the earl. His father died and left him well off; steady young man, too; got an estate near my little place down in Essex. But are you sure of what you say, my dear sir?" I replied by showing him Lord Dunstraw's conditional agreement, and, after very few more words I got Wood to give me a letter to the effect that if Lord Dunstraw would agree to join the board, he (Wood) would at once do the same, and on the same conditions as his lordship.

From that time my task was easy. So anxious was Wood that the affair should succeed, that he took the trouble of getting two first class City men on the direction, who gave their written agreement to join the concern provided Mr. Wood did so, and on condition that the bank of which they were both directors should have the account of the Rio Grande and Mexico Grand Junction Railway Company (Limited).

I had four more names to get, but these were easy to obtain, armed as I now was with the conditional promise in writing of four first-class men. For business, no person makes a better director than your retired Indian official, whether civil or military. His previous occupations fit him peculiarly for business, he is invariably punctual, and seldom otherwise than honourable and honest to a fault, if the expression may be allowed. What I mean is, that he is too apt, both from his own respect for truth, and the feeling he has that every man's word should be believed until found out to be false, to make himself the victim of the first sharper into whose hands he may fall. The fifth gentleman I got to sit on our board was one of this class. General Foster had, in the military pay or audit office of Bengal, acquired a knowledge of business which is rare to find amongst military men, and, this being known to all his old colleagues now in England, we *felt* sure that the appearance of his name upon the list would bring us many applications for shares from old Anglo-Indians when once we were able to come out with our advertisements in the public papers.

The next gentleman I applied to was a person of a very different stamp. A judicious promoter of companies is obliged, if he wishes to bring

out a really good thing, to arrange his board as a bouquet-maker does his flowers. The colours, and kinds, and sizes of the flowers must be kept distinct, although blended in one; and the description, occupation, and antecedents of those who compose the other should be all considered, arranged, and placed each in its due proportion. Put in too much of any particular ingredient, and you ruin the scheme.

What we now wanted was the country gentleman element, a little more of the Indian article, with a strong dash of the member of parliament—the mixture would at least bear two of the latter, and, therefore, I at once tried to secure them.

But in these days of joint-stock company speculations, a wealthy member of parliament is pretty sure either to lock up his money and keep out of every undertaking of the kind, or else to have his price, and only to sell himself to those who can pay what he asks. There was a kind of half City man—a German by birth, but who had, after long residence in England, become a naturalised subject of Queen Victoria, changed his family designation and set up for a highly respectable Briton—whose name would help us immensely, but I knew his price would be something enormous. To get hold of some one that knew him, and to offer this gentleman a good round sum if he obtained his written consent to joining the board, was easy enough. Ready money I had none, and therefore was forced to make my bargain in shares, of which I was to have a very large slice as part of my share of the promotion money.

Mr. Grass—his name when he came from Leipsic twenty-five years ago, and set up as a toyshop-keeper in a very humble way in Whitechapel, was Gröeus—member of parliament for Inverstone, director of the Universal Financial Association, of the Cleveland Banking Corporation, of the Discounting Credit Company, of the South Junction Railway, and chairman of the Lucknow Bank, was a typical man of a class which ten years ago did not exist in England. He had made a very large fortune entirely by speculations in shares; and, having started without fifty pounds of capital, a stranger and a sojourner in the land, was now one of the magnates of fashion (in a certain set, of course), a member of the first assembly of gentlemen in the world, and for whose name as a director of any undertaking, the business world of financial London was willing to pay any price. In order to get a simple letter of introduction to this individual, I had to promise ten shares of my promotion fee, with ten pounds paid upon each. This letter I enclosed in one of my own, asking for an interview, at such an hour, on such a day, and in such a place, as Mr. Grass would find most convenient. I received a reply in a week, written and signed, not by the M.P. himself, but by his private secretary, and saying very curtly that if I would call the following day at half-past eight in the morning, at his private residence, number 104, Edinburgh-square, Mr. Grass would see me.

On the appointed day I was to a minute at the place indicated in his letter. The square was a new one, in one of the new quarters, of a new district, in a new part of London. The house, of course, was new, and everything in it was new. I sent in my card, and—after being left standing full ten minutes in the hall—was shown into the dining-room, where the furniture looked, if possible, newer than anything I had yet seen, and the walls were covered from top to bottom with pictures which smelt of varnish. The bran-new marble clock on the chimney-piece showed that it was a few minutes more than half an hour, from the time I entered the dining-room, until a half valet, half footman, announced that, if I would step this way, Mr. Grass would see me.

"This way" led to the great man's study. Mr. Grass was a good-looking middle-aged man, trying very hard to hide his German pronunciation, which, however, appeared every moment above the surface of his English. Like most men who have risen from a low to a wealthy position, he seemed always afraid lest others should not pay him proper respect, and his tone was, perhaps unconsciously, overbearing and dictatorial. He appeared to know the nature of the business I had come upon, and at once gave me to understand that it was hopeless to think of getting him, the great Mr. Grass, to join the direction of any new company; but when I talked of "making it a matter of business" with him (which is City English for paying a good round sum), and showed him the conditional consent of Lord Dunstraw, as well as of Mr. Wood, and the two bank directors, he changed his language, and said he would think it over, and let me know. The earl's name charmed him, but the lucre charmed him still more.

From my club, I at once despatched a note to Mr. Grass, binding myself, if he would agree to act as a director of our board, that I would, on the day I received my promotion money, hand him five hundred pounds in cash, and a thousand pounds in shares of the company. To this I received a speedy answer, saying that the M.P. agreed to my terms; but that I must further give him an undertaking that, if the Rio Grande and Mexico Grand Junction Railway Company was obliged to go to any of the finance companies to be brought out, that the undertaking of which he was a director—the Universal Financial Association—should have the refusal of the job. Of course, I knew that this would be merely putting a few hundred more pounds in Mr. Grass's pocket; but, as I had no objection to offer, I at once wrote back, that, in this matter, he should have his own way; and upon this, he sent me his written agreement to join the direction of our company.

There could now be little doubt but what our undertaking would prove a success. The same day that Mr. Grass consented to join the board, I obtained another director, in the person of a retired Indian civil servant, who was known

to be a man of some means, and was already chairman of an Indian bank, so that the number which Lord Dunstraw had fixed on as the smallest of which he could form one, was not only filled up, but they were all gentlemen of respectability, and some of them really great catches in the way of directors. The prospectus, as now printed for private circulation, stood as follows:

THE RIO GRANDE AND CITY OF MEXICO GRAND JUNCTION RAILWAY COMPANY (LIMITED).

(*To be incorporated under the Companies Act of* 1862, *whereby the liability of each shareholder is limited to the amount of his shares.*)

CAPITAL £5,000,000.

Divided into a Hundred Thousand Shares of £50 each, of which it is only intended to issue Fifty Thousand Shares for the present; £2 per share to be paid upon application, £3 upon allotment, and the remainder by instalments of £5, at intervals of not less than three months between each payment, until £25 is paid up, it not being deemed necessary to call up more.

DIRECTORS.

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE EARL OF DUNSTRAW, 36, Enfield-square, W., Dunstraw Castle, Essex, and Wakeham Court, Yorkshire. (Chairman.)

GEORGE WOOD, Esq. (Messrs. A. C. Wood and Co.), 27, Chapman's-court.

JOHN GRASS, Esq., M.P. (Director of the Universal Financial Association, of the Discounting Credit Company, and Chairman of the Lucknow Bank), 104, Edinburgh-square, S.W.

WILLIAM END, Esq. (Director of the Town Bank), 25, Great Martin-street, E.C.

GENERAL FORSTER (late Bengal Army), Flinders Lodge, Kilburne-road, W.

E. S. WATSON, Esq., M.P., The Temple.

EDMUND RESTER, Esq. (Director of the Town Bank), 64, East-street, E.C.

JAMES CURRIE, Esq. (late Bombay Civil Service, Chairman Bombay, Bengal, and Madras Bank), 446, Westbourne-terrace, W.

BANKERS.

The Town Bank (Limited), the Bank of Lucknow (Limited), the Bombay, Bengal, and Madras Bank (Limited).

SOLICITORS.

MESSRS. QUIBBLE and QUIRCK, 46, Manchester-street, E.C.

BROKERS.

MESSRS. TULSE, HALL AND TULSE, 6, Judas-court, E.C.

AUDITORS.

MESSRS. FRENCH AND GOODWATER, 108, Helen-street.

SECRETARY (pro tem.)

WILLIAM WILSON, Esq.

Temporary Offices, 49, Great Henry-street, E.C.

PROSPECTUS.

This Company has been formed for the object of constructing a line of railway between the far-famed city of Mexico and the banks of the Rio Grande, or Great River, which forms the natural as well as the political boundary between the new empire of Mexico and the United States of America.

The immense amount of traffic which now exists between these points, must be increased tenfold by the establishment of a railway which, as is well known, always creates for itself the trade and commerce upon which it afterwards feeds. The immense wealth of produce which the state of Texas possesses, and the great demand for this in every part of Mexico, the vast mineral wealth of the latter country, and its constant exportation of the precious metals to pay for the goods brought into the empire by the enterprising citizens of the States, are so well known as not to need recapitulation here. At present it is calculated that more than half a million of laden mules pass each way every year, and each of these charge what is equivalent to about one pound seven and fourpence half-penny for the journey north, and about a third more on their return trip towards the south. Allowing that the railway will be able to carry these goods at even one-half the rates now charged (the public will gladly pay more, but the minimum has been put down), here would be an annual income which would give a return of at least ten per cent upon the capital of the Company.

And so forth, for nearly a column of the Times. To read the prospectus, any one would imagine that it had been written by some one who had resided all his life in Mexico, and had most carefully made his calculations as well as his surveys whilst going over the ground where the railway had to be constructed. The truth being that neither Wilson nor myself had ever been further west than Plymouth or Liverpool in our lives. But like the editor of the Eatanswille Gazette, we read up to our subject. We studied carefully several of the novels of Captain Mayne Reid, and thus got a smattering of life in Mexico, together with the names of a few towns and villages, which we interspersed here and there throughout the prospectus. But of the distances from place to place we knew nothing whatever; and even to this day we are in profound ignorance as to whether the distance between the Rio Grande and Mexico is three, or seven hundred, or two thousand miles.

A few days after I had succeeded in getting Mr. Grass and Mr. Currie as directors, there was a preliminary meeting of the board, held at my chambers. Being now very sanguine of success, and Lord Dunstraw (who, for my sake, and with his usual good humour, began to take a real interest in the affair) having lent me two "tenners" until we had got matters straight, I provided an excellent cold luncheon, with plenty of good wine, from The London, in Fleet-street, and had a grey-haired sergeant of Commissionnaires, as well as the one-armed private of the same corps, to wait upon my guests and run messages. His lordship took the chair. The court Wood paid Lord Dunstraw was a sight worth seeing. "Yes, my lord;" "No, my lord;" "Your lordship is right;" "What is your lordship's opinion?" "His lordship has just very truly remarked"—were repeated every two minutes. The chief questions mooted were whether we should bring the company out at

once, and who was to be responsible for the advertising expenses, &c. The first was decided in the affirmative; but as regards the latter there was much difference of opinion. One thing was very clear, that, although all the gentlemen present looked upon the affair as a very certain success, not above two—Lord Dunstraw and Mr. Wood, the latter agreeing to everything the former proposed—would either put down, or be responsible for, a shilling of the preliminary expenses. This was rather a stopper; but nothing could be better or kinder than Lord Dunstraw's behaviour. He offered to give his cheque for two hundred pounds towards the preliminary expenses, if his brother directors would put down half that amount each. Although backed up by Mr. Wood, who at once offered the same amount as our chairman, as well as by Mr. Wood's two friends, Mr. End and Mr. Rester, not another director would put his hand in his pocket; and the majority of them, headed by Mr. Grass, strongly urged that, in order to make our success a certainty, we should have the company brought out under the auspices of one of the financial associations. After a long discussion, this was agreed to.

As the promoter of the undertaking, and as not having yet made over the company to the directors, I reserved to myself the right of doing whatever seemed to me best in the matter. The meeting broke up, all the directors leaving except Mr. Grass, who asked leave to write a letter in my chambers. When his colleagues had taken their departure, this gentleman reminded me that I had promised if the undertaking had to be brought out by any of the financial companies, the preference would be given to that of which he was a director, the "Universal Financial Association," and that he had my undertaking to this effect in writing. Of course I replied that he need be in no fear of my not standing by my words. At the same time I saw why he had been so anxious to hinder the other directors putting down their names as responsible for the preliminary expenses. No doubt he had an interest in getting us into the hands of his financial association. However, I said nothing, but with seeming thankfulness accepted the letter of introduction which he gave me to the general manager of the Universal Finance, and the following morning I proceeded to present it.

Mr. Scoften, who was at the head of the office, was a very great man in his own estimation. He kept me waiting at least an hour before he could, or would see me; and even then proceeded to "haw, haw" the whole affair in a way which I could not understand, and would not put up with. I left him abruptly, and going home wrote an angry letter to Mr. Grass, saying I had been so slighted by his friend that I should the next day put myself in communication with another office, and make what arrangements I could with them. This very decided note was the means of bringing the great man to his senses. Before I was dressed next morning, Mr. Grass was at my chambers, and begged I would leave all negotiations with the Universal Finance in his hands. To this I consented; saying that if in three clear days I did not get a decided answer, I should consider the whole affair as at an end, and would apply to some other finance office to take up the business, and bring out the Rio Grande and Mexico Grand Junction Railway Company.

Twenty-four hours saw Mr. Grass back at my chambers with the reply of the Finance Association. My astonishment at the quickness of his movements was nothing compared with the amazement with which I listened to what he called "the excellent terms" he had made for me with the Finance Company. In the first place, I was privately to give to Mr. Scoften, the general manager, a trifle of one thousand pounds, in shares of the Rio Grande, just to make matters pleasant for all parties. This was for himself. I was then to pay the Universal Finance Company the sum of five thousand pounds for bringing out the company. For this fee they so far ensured our success, that if the undertaking did not float, they would pay all the preliminary expenses out of their own funds. But if it did come out, and we did proceed to an allotment of shares, they were to get their five thousand pounds clear, and it was to be the first charge paid out of the deposit money. As a rider, the Finance Association promised not only to float the Rio Grande Railway, but to bring it out at not less than two premium, and raise it by degrees to four premium, when they would, at the proper time, leave it to fall again. How we thus Worked the Rio Grande Railway shall be shown next week.

EVERY MAN'S POISON.

He was a pale fat man, in whose face self-sufficiency and querulousness struggled for mastery. Self-sufficient when dwelling upon his own merits, he became querulous directly we questioned him as to the conduct of the poor. He was the owner of small house property in this fever-stricken district; and our party comprised the late resident physician of the Fever Hospital, the parochial medical officer of St. Dragon-in-the-South, and their friend—myself. We had been up decayed and rotting stairs, down close and fœtid passages, over cellar kitchens where men and women slept, and into sleeping garrets where they worked, and lived, and ate, and we were now pursuing our researches in Cummin-street—a locality well known to the officers of the Fever Hospital as furnishing them a constant and fertile crop of patients—when in the back yard of one of its miserable houses we came upon the pale fat man.

The air of injured innocence with which he vaunted the purity and abundance of the water supply, made the delicate suggestion that perhaps he was the landlord, appropriate enough. Yes, seven of these houses were his—he was now collecting the weekly rent—and a nice expensive job he'd had with them! Taps to turn the water on.

and lids to cover the cisterns with? Ah! that showed how little we knew the sort of people he had to deal with. Why, they'd steal the taps, and burn the lids for firewood,—that's what they'd do, before they'd been put there a week. Scum upon the water made it unwholesome because it caught the taint of the closet and yard? Well, there was a good deal of fancy in such things, leastwise he'd found so; and if the gentlemen would taste it, he'd back the water out of that tank to be the best and sweetest in the street. Why, his houses had to supply all the neighbours with water for three weeks, not so long ago; and he'd spent so much money on the property—five pounds once on a single house—that there'd be very little hanging to it, very little indeed, at the end of the year. Ought to be a supply of water to the closet? Why, didn't we see that waste-pipe at the top of the cistern? Well, that pipe did supply water to the closet whenever it was over-full; and if the mark there showed that the water hadn't reached the pipe for weeks, why the mark told lies, or else it was the fault of the water company; and he couldn't be expected to help that. Windows ought to open at the top, ought they? Did we know how much sashes and new panes had cost him since he'd bought the houses, which he wished he'd never seen them? And all for people who didn't like windows which were not broken, who smashed the tiles on the roof for mischief, and who'd make the place foul and dirty again in a week, if you was to paint and whitewash it from top to bottom. They liked dirt, and wouldn't use water not if it was tapped and messed into every room of the place; and, as far as water went, he was bound to say—repeating it each time as if it were an original remark—if that was all they wanted, his tanks were the very best in all the street.

The opinions of this excellent landlord are worth recording, because he was a not unfavourable specimen of his class; and his houses, bad as they are, are palaces compared to hundreds of others in the same parish. We had, in this worthy tradesman and house-owner, the raw material from which vestries are composed, just as in the foul water, in the damp and sodden yard, and in the open closet, we had the raw material from which typhus is manufactured wholesale. There is neither exaggeration nor straining after effect in the statements made concerning the fever-dens of certain metropolitan districts. Beds of typhus may be marked out with the same exactitude as the strata in a geological diagram, and in a single afternoon you may walk through street after street, and alley after alley, from which the fever-taint never departs; where residence, deliberate and aforethought, would be as suicidal as if we put arsenic in our tea; and where every condition of air, water, and drainage, remains as it was twelve years ago, when the nation was panic-stricken, and cholera carried off thousands of rich and poor.

St. Dragon's, as every one knows, is on the Surrey side of the Thames; and Cummin-street is quoted as a favourable specimen of what can be accomplished by an intelligent vestry, resolute on local improvement. It is true that the progress of my friend the physician seemed like that of a very popular member visiting his constituency, so frequently was he recognised by people who had been in-patients of the hospital; but this awkward circumstance, of course, belonged to a past condition of things; for has not Cummin-street been inspected, and swept, and garnished; and is it not held up as a model of sanitary excellence? Look at its roadway—can anything be more comfortable, or more surely conduce to longevity, than its present condition? Foul black slime, ankle-deep in many places; pools of stagnant filthy water; heaps of offal, and heads and entrails of the fish being cured in the houses on each side of it; occasional dead dogs and cats cast in from adjacent courts; lumps of dung, and hillocks of sodden straw; such is its still life. The scavenger comes occasionally; but either our visits have been singularly unfortunate, and the people we have questioned particularly untruthful, or the appearance of that functionary is not frequent enough to affect the normal condition of the place. Children of all ages are playing in and with this filth. Some little faces are not yet marred by the pestilential influences, moral and physical, with which they are surrounded; others, notably that group of sickly girls languidly toying with the fish-heads just thrown out of the open door beyond them, look ripe for coffin and shroud; others again, as the group of ragged youths playing at pitch-halfpenny, are the hardened and acclimatised survivors of diseases which year after year have thinned their ranks. The street is full of workers. Lift the latch of any one of the doors, and you stand in a kitchen where chairs are being made, or brushes manufactured, or fish is salted, or old packing-rags and the lead linings from tea-chests are being dexterously manipulated for future use. Ask to see a back yard, or make inquiry as to trade, or number of family, or condition and calling of the husband, and you meet with unrepining answers and ready civility. It is passing strange, too, that the people who are, as your friend the landlord and possible vestryman insists, so irremediably addicted to mischief and dirt, should, out of their scanty means, have spent money in decoration. None of the houses but show some little effort at ornament; few but contain one or two of the simple home relics women love to keep. We are evidently not visiting the abodes of profligacy or idleness; and the question will assert itself, are not these people somewhat maligned, and might they not be as capable of appreciating clear pure water, and less terribly unwholesome air, as the interested critics who deny them both? Meanwhile they sicken and die, and the fever-poison spreads. "I come from the country, myself, and I've had the fever, because London does not agree with me," said a poor woman, whose hollow cadaverous cheeks, and wasted form, spoke with touching significance of the day when the poor little lame girl at her side would be motherless

and alone. "We haven't had any water for three weeks, because our pipe won't act, and the man as collects the rent says he'll see to it, and don't do nothing," quietly observed a pallid brush-maker, whose yard we were in. "Yes, the sink's often stopped up like that, and it gets foul, and smells much worse than this; and if the neighbours didn't let us have some of theirs, we shouldn't have no water at all." In no case were the butts or cisterns, even of the houses in which the supply was by comparison good, provided with a covering. In every instance they acted as traps for the foul exhalations from closet and yard; and the water they held—the sole supply, be it remembered, for drinking, cooking, and washing—bore a scum upon its surface which might be skimmed off and bottled as a drink for producing fever.

After exploring house after house in Cummin-street, finding the yards in every case ill-paved, in most cases with wide patches of black foul soil between the porous brick and irregular bits of soft stone; observing, too, that the poor tenants had generally to provide the barrels and pans in which the water was kept, the house-owner making no such provision; noting that in no one instance were the closets efficiently appointed; learning from my medical friends that the sloppy soil of the yards, and the exposed condition of the water, close as it always was to closet, drain, and earth, were positive invitations to fever and death—I left, wondering, if this were a thoroughfare held up for admiration by the local authorities, what could have been its condition before it benefited by their purifying hand, and how much worse might be the sights in store for me. We had seen children at play in yards five feet by three, where the oozings from the panless closets had saturated the black soil, where an open stagnant drain mingled its effluvia with that of rotting water-butts, and where an open dust-heap, with its concomitants of cabbage-stalks and the heads and tails of long departed fish, furnished forth the toys; and it became a curious problem what could be shown us more fatally destructive to health.

Passing through long and narrow streets, where "fever at six and eight," "cholera so bad in 1853 and nothing done since," "an open cesspool at the back of that house," "man and his wife and several children died of the fever in the room where those broken windows are," made up the notes by the way, we gained a small thoroughfare, a great part of which was rented by the greengrocer at the corner, who sublet it in single rooms to the tenants we were about to visit. Fever had raged here furiously, a formal report had been made to the vestry by the doctor six weeks before, and the result was that an officer of the parish had been instructed "to see what could be done;" the result of which energetic measure was, that the exalted functionary in question being very busy, "had sent his man to put a little lime down." The back yards here were so inconceivably horrible, that those of Cummin-street seemed clean and wholesome by comparison. Here, the oozing and soil from the closet comes through its walls of rotten wood, permeates the black earth of the little yard on which there is not even a pretence of paving, and runs down to the open window of the dwelling-room, where a box-maker and his wife are at work. Night and day this couple, type of the dozens of other couples with which the houses are crammed, inhale the stench and effluvia from closet, and from the dead dogs and garbage of the yard beyond. The woman told us they were compelled "to close the window when the smell became unusually bad, and made them feel faint," but they were now working on unconcernedly, though its strength was powerfully apparent to noses less painfully acclimatised. The tubs or barrels in the yard were, of course, uncovered, and were lined with a thick green fungus, like the water-moss we think so pretty in an aquarium. On scraping the side of one of these, the foul slime came off, inch thick, upon the finger; and on one of our party trying the experiment too hastily, a portion of the barrel itself was scooped out, for it was of the consistency of touchwood, and crumbled in the hand. Windows were opened, and invitations "to see the sort of place they charge three shillings and ninepence a week for," were freely given us. A broken ceiling, through which the rain was dripping steadily in three places at once; walls rapidly crumbling through neglect and dirt; a bedstead and two rude chairs; made up the home. Nothing spoke of the personal occupancy of the tenant, save the few miserable rags drying on the string running across the room. What clothes she had, she wore; what clothes her husband possessed, were with him seeking work at the water-side. "Yes, she'd had children, but they were all dead. She hadn't been here long enough to speak about the water or the smell, but her neighbours told her it was bad, and she supposed it wasn't healthy, but what were they to do with her husband wanting to live near his work, which was looking out for jobs at the water-side?" So with her neighbour in the little room opposite; so with the old couple who were crooning over a small fire in a room below, and whose folding bed was turned up, because of the simple impossibility of sitting or standing or doing anything but lying on it when it was put down; so with the decent woman with a child in her arms, whose hulking, sleeping husband "was not drunk, but had been over-persuaded with a glass of rum, which had been too much for him;" all paying from a fourth to a fifth of their weekly pittance—earned with what bitter difficulty God only knows—for the privilege of being slowly and surely killed off by the deadly fever-taint coming from vitiated water and poisoned air. In these houses the cholera raged furiously in 1853, when the most urgent representations were made to the vestry, of the necessity of prompt and decided action. In these houses fever patients are perpetually found, and the report of six weeks ago has, so far, been as unproductive of any practical improvement as

the report of a dozen years ago. It was pitiable to talk with these poor people, to hear of the shifts and struggles of their poverty, to see the wife patiently waiting for night in the bare and squalid room, and only anxious as to whether the water-side had given John a job, or whether he would perforce come home empty-handed, as on the night before; to mark their uncomplaining attitude and the cheerfulness with which they met their lot; and then to leave them, with the certainty that they were being as surely poisoned as any victim of the Borgias who smelt the fatal bouquet, or touched the deadly ring.

Up dark courts with pastoral names, down foul alleys which babbled foolishly of green fields, by streets every one of which were as familiar to the hospital physician as the commonest drug he prescribes—streets he had never seen, but which had sent him crop after crop of patients through long years, each crop heavier than the last; past rows of houses where people lay dying, and where the whole population is, as was aptly said, "in such a tindery condition that the least spark of disease would spread among them like wildfire, and carry off thousands in its train."

Leaving the bustle, glare, and noise of the leading thoroughfare, we come upon an alley where naked children disport themselves upon the flagstones, and where every house door bears token of the teeming life within. On entering one of these, we find its closet within a few feet of the front door, inside the threshold of which is an open sink, stopped up at the time of our visit, and ankle deep in ill-smelling water. The little girl with the wan cheeks, the bright eyes, and gentle smile, has just come home from the hospital, and, recognising the physician, follows us meekly from house to house, silently looking up at her friend, as if his presence reminded her that light, and air, and cleanliness, are existent in the world. Publicity having been recently given to the shameful condition of the first house we entered, efforts have been made to patch up or gloss over its most glaring evils. The closet has been mended, and the oozings which made the bedrooms on each side of it common cesspools, have been checked. Yet nothing has been done to the rooms themselves, and they remain with their flooring sodden and their walls saturated with filthy exhalations of the foulest refuse.

There is a ghastly monotony about such experiences as these. Kennels in which no sane man would allow the least valuable of his animals to sleep, filled night and day with men, women, and children; rooms seven feet by five, with four women working, living, and sleeping in them; a yard with a disused pigsty converted into a sleeping box, in which an old creature huddles herself every night between a reeking closet and an open water-butt; houses where the waterspouts are consistently broken, and the rain trickles down walls, and forces its way into beds and clothing; pipes which will not act, and water which will never come when wanted; make up the dreary round. In one street, which, like the whitened sepulchre of old, is fair without (for it is comparatively wide and well kept), we found that a house notoriously infected with fever, a house where a man and his wife and children died not very many weeks ago, was already full of new tenants, and that no steps had been taken to purify or disinfect it. The yard was ankle-deep in fœtid slime, which formed its only pavement; the water-butt was so foul that its contents could not be swallowed, and a small wooden basin was put over it to catch the produce of the pipe; and the general condition of the property was so filthy that even the poor people themselves believed that "something was going to be done!" Twelve months ago, the vestry of Saint Dragon's was persuaded by its medical officer to send a deputation to examine into and report upon these very houses. These gentlemen came back horrified at what they saw. An inspector must be forthwith appointed, and this dreadful sin and crying scandal must be removed. Parishioners, even poor parishioners, must not be killed off with impunity; and, for the honour of the vestry, it was essential that this matter should be taken in hand at once. But the meeting was adjourned; the vestrymen, who themselves held small house property, said to each other that "there was no knowing where these new-fangled notions would end, if the parish inspector were allowed to put people to what expense he thought fit;" and the end of all, is, that the houses remain in the exact condition now, they were in then; and while one set of tenants have been fatally thinned, their successors in the same rooms are being ripened for a similar fate, even while they are hoping with touching simplicity that "something will be done." What that something is, and how far it is likely to be effectual, will be readily estimated when we know it depends upon the liberality of a landlord who is to do as much and as little as seems right in his own eyes, and who has neither fear of parish interference nor dread of inspection before him. Among the vestrymen of Saint Dragon's are eight or ten owners of houses such as this; houses with an allowance of two and a half gallons of water for each person per day, are plentiful in the parish; houses where even this supply is irregular and uncertain are far from rare; and on Sunday, the only day, in many cases, when there is time for a thorough cleansing, the water is not turned on at all! From Monk-street, where there were some forty deaths from cholera in 1854, eighteen cases of fever have been sent to the hospital within the last few months; from Saint Dragon's New Town, the houses of which are built upon wet ground, without any provision against the rise of damp, and with filthy undrained yards, one hundred and twenty fever patients were sent from July, 1864, to September, 1865. The rule in this parish seems to be, to admit fresh tenants as soon as the late tenants have been finished off, and to do this without cleansing or other sanitary precaution. The result is what I have shown. Disease and premature death are accepted as a

sort of fate by the poor wretches themselves, and vestrymen and landlords make long speeches about the improvident and ill-conditioned lives of the poor. If a medical officer be offensively punctilious as to what he considers his duty, if he be persuaded that human life is of more consequence than the prejudices or petty interests of guardians, and if he report accordingly, he soon finds himself a marked man. His opinions are laughed at, and his suggestions ignored, while the vestry protests, like the fat landlord we met in Cummin-street, against being asked to protect such mischievous and degraded people as those with whom they have unhappily to deal.

If the component parts of a metropolitan vestry be considered, and the position, education, and intelligence of its members be weighed, it becomes grotesquely horrible that an irresponsible power over life and death should be vested in such hands. Let not the opulent or well-born content themselves with giving this matter the languid attention we too commonly vouchsafe to other people's concerns. The fever poison is spreading far and wide, and its victims multiply year by year. In Saint Dragon's alone its rate of progress has been as follows: In 1861 there were twenty-five fever deaths; in 1862, forty-eight; in 1863, eighty-eight; in 1864, one hundred and thirteen; in 1865, one hundred and twenty-eight. Every one of these deaths represents on an average eight cases of fever, or about three thousand four hundred in one parish; and though they occurred almost wholly among the poorest, it is impossible to fix a limit to the contagion they diffuse. From these fever-stricken houses, charwomen, slop-workers, porters, street stall-keepers, and thousands of humble workers, who live by ministering to the wants of the rich, come forth daily, charged with the fatal errand of visiting upon society the consequences of its most sinful supineness and its most shameful neglect. Read, father or mother, this extract from the Report of the Council of Public Health of the Citizen Associates of New York for 1865, and then, looking at the children smiling at your knees, ask how long they are to be exposed to dangers which could be easily obviated, and which are due to the dense ignorance and narrow-mindedness of the people in whose hands you are content to leave your own fate, and the fate of those dearer to you than life:

"A young man, residing with his parents, in Thirty-second-street, contracted typhus at the bedside of a sick friend in another block; his father in turn contracted the same fever from the son, and died; three other cases followed in the same family. From this family the poison spread to visitors from a family in another block, in which family six cases occurred in succession, and two died. During this time the fever was communicated to two other families in the same house. In the mean time, some of these people being alarmed at the spread and fatality of the disease, removed to another block, and carried the infection with them. The inspector traced the same fever spreading through families in Twenty-eighth-street, and was able to trace its introduction from the fountain of infection in Thirty-first-street. He found that seventeen cases of typhus, in five families, and in four distinct localities, resulted from the careless exposure of the fever patients to promiscuous visitors. And all this was but the beginning of an evil the records of which are still in progress."

There is no reasonable doubt that prompt removal, isolation, and cleansing, would have stayed this scourge at the first or second case; any more than that con'inued neglect will cause it to progress with fearful rapidity and at compound interest. Saint Dragon's has furnished a larger number of fever patients in a given period than any other London parish or union, but it is only a slightly exaggerated specimen of many places of its class. If the infected houses of this and other parishes were scrubbed and limewashed from top to bottom, and were afterwards kept empty for not less than ten days, they would become safe habitations; if the commonest rules of decency were observed in their management, they need not become infected at all. That the Lodging-house Act is systematically evaded, and that beds are let by the night in unlicensed houses; that house refuse and dirt is not removed for days, often for weeks, and sometimes for months: the dustmen demanding money in addition to the contractor's parish pay; that the parochial inspection is partial, inefficient, and inoperative; that only one-tenth of the quantity of water essential to health is supplied to vast districts; that out of seven thousand houses, four thousand are farmed or sub-let, and require close and authoritative supervision; that the result is a chronic pestilence, which will blaze up into a devastating plague as soon as an unwholesome season sets in; these are surely facts which justify a cry for reform. Local self-government is a mighty pretty thing, and centralisation is an ugly bugbear; but, inasmuch as you and I and every Londoner who reads this page, are in daily and increasing peril of being sacrificed to the fine old conservatism of that obstinate block-head the British vestryman, I should like to ask if the country's constitution would be greatly endangered by its protecting mine, or whether it be beneath the dignity of parliament to check the wholesale dissemination of poison, and the recklessly indiscriminate dealing out of death?

LITTLE PEOPLE.

Men of moderate height have one solace under their disappointment. Although they are not run after and admired for their great or small stature, they are like giants and dwarfs in this, that two of them sometimes make a moderate pair. Add the ninety-three inches or so of Chang Woo Gow the great, to the thirty-eight inches of Chung Mow the small, and divide by two, and you get two men of medium stature; and so you do if you adopt the same plan with people of any ordinary and familiar stature.

Physiologists have discussed the question whether there are any causes in operation likely to produce a race of dwarfs, such as the pigmies believed in by the Greeks, and such as those little people whom travellers once asserted to be living in Abyssinia. Physiologists have arrived at a few general conclusions as to persons a little above or a little below the middle height;* but they disbelieve in any race exceedingly tall or exceedingly short. All the examples well authenticated are individual only.

We find plentiful notices of people less than four feet high. Even at and below forty inches, the list is formidable. Fabricius speaks of a dwarf forty inches high. Thomas Coates, who died about eighty years ago, was of this stature. John Coan, the Norfolk dwarf, was thirty-eight inches. Gaspard Boutin speaks of one thirty-six inches high; and this was also the height of John Marshall, known as "Crutchy Jack," who died at Leeds about half a century ago, and who was the father of eight fine children. There was a little man exhibited in London, in the time of George the Fourth, whose thirty-six inches of height were clad in military attire, with top-boots; "he strutted his tiny legs, and held his head aloft with not less importance than the proudest general officer could assume upon his promotion to the rank of field-marshal." Long before this, there was exhibited, "opposite the Mews-gate at Charing-cross, a little black man, being but three foot high, and thirty-three years of age, straight and proportionate every way, who is distinguished by the name of the Black Prince; and with him his wife, the little woman, not three feet high, and thirty years of age, straight and proportionate as any woman in the land, which is commonly called the Fairy Queen."

Below three feet in height, a dwarf likes to descend, if he can. This makes him more famous. Lydia Walpole, a dwarf at Bartholomew Fair forty years ago, was thirty-five inches high. A brush-maker of Edinburgh, so short as to be known as the Town Steeple, married a girl who was a little shorter than himself: they averaged thirty-four inches each, and were generally known as being as broad as they were long. Eighty years ago, there died Mrs. Kelly, known as the Irish Fairy; she was thirty-four inches high, and died in giving birth to a child. But the best specimen of humanity of this altitude was, perhaps, Madame Teresa, known as the Corsican Fairy, who was exhibited in London some years before the Irish Fairy. She was an elegant little creature, pretty, womanly and yet fairy-like; less than a yard in height, she was still a lady, if her portraits are to be trusted. In the time of Sir Hans Sloane there was exhibited, at the Mitre and Rummer at Charing-cross, "a little wild man, aged twenty-seven, and thirty-four inches high." And "at a coffee-house in Charing-cross" (a famous place for exhibitions was Charing-cross in those days) "a little man, fifty years old, two feet nine inches high, and the father of eight children; when he sleeps he puts his head between his feet, to rest on by way of a pillow, and his great toes in each ear, which posture he shows to the general satisfaction of all the spectators." The Liège people boast of an old woman, who died about a century ago, at the age of a hundred, and with the altitude of thirty-two inches. Mary Jane, of the same height, died at Wem, in Shropshire, ninety years ago; but the poor thing was deformed and lame. An advertisement of the time of William and Mary tells of a German woman, "at the brandy-shop, over against the Eagle and Child, in Stocks' Market" (where the Mansion-house now stands), "the dwarf of the world, being but two feet seven in height, and the mother of two children." This was also the height of "a man of the least stature that has been seen in the memory of man," at the Plume of Feathers in the same locality. One exhibition was of "a little Scotchman, but two feet and six inches high, near upon sixty years old; he sings and dances with his son; he formerly kept a writing-school, and discourses of the Scriptures and of many eminent histories very wisely"—a pedagogue in a nut-shell. The Journal de Médecine notices a man twenty-eight inches high. Mr. Simon Paap, a Dutch dwarf, who attracted a good deal of attention in London fifty years ago, was about as many inches in height as he was pounds in weight and years in age—twenty-eight. In Queen Anne's time there was "a little fairy woman, come from Italy, being but two feet two inches high." There is a record of one Hannah Bounce, who, although only twenty-five inches high, gave birth to a child.

Of course, if the attraction of a dwarf varies inversely as his length, he will try to be less than two feet long if he can; and, equally of course, the narratives to that effect are all the more open to suspicion. Demaillet, the French consul at Cairo, says he saw a dwarf only eighteen inches high. Birch, in his Collections, speaks of one, only sixteen inches high, and thirty-seven years old. M. Virey, in the Dictionnaire des Sciences, notices a German dwarf girl eighteen inches high, but then she was only nine years old. A girl was exhibited at Bartholomew Fair "not much above eighteen inches long, having never a perfect bone in any part of her, only the head; yet she hath all her senses to admiration, and discourses, reads well, sings, whistles, and all very pleasant to hear." At the Charing-cross Coffee-house, corner of Spring-gardens, early in the last century, was to be seen "a man, six-and-forty years old, one foot nine inches high, yet fathoms six foot five inches with his arms." He must have been an oddity, seeing that "he walks naturally upon his hands, raising his body one foot four inches off the ground; jumps upon a table near three foot high with one hand."

Many dwarfs have had some degree of historic celebrity attached to their names, owing to the circumstances of their career.

Jeffery Hudson, a Rutland man, was one of

* See TALL PEOPLE, vol. xii., page 489.

this small band of little people who have gained name and fame. At eight years old he was only eighteen inches high, and was taken into the suite of the Duke of Buckingham. When Charles the First and Queen Henrietta Maria were, on one occasion (which has become tiresome from being perpetually cited), entertained by the duke, Jeffery Hudson was served up in a cold pie, fully armed and accoutred. The queen was so delighted with the tiny creature that she begged him of the duke, and Jeffery forthwith entered the royal suite. As he grew up he displayed much tact, and was employed in many delicate missions abroad and at home. During a masque at court the palace porter, a gigantic fellow, took Jeffery out of his pocket. He could bear jokes of this kind prepared for set occasions, but he was much irritated by the mocking raillery of the courtiers. While on a foreign mission, Hudson was so maddened by an insult of this kind that he challenged the offender; the courtier appeared, armed with a squirt; Hudson insisted that the affair should not end with this additional insult; they met with pistols, and Hudson shot him dead on the spot. The little man (who was eighteen inches high at thirty years old, and then grew till he was forty-five) lived to be involved in suspicion concerning a Popish plot, and died in prison a little while before the death of Charles the Second. Some years ago his slashed and bedizened satin doublet and hose were in the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford. Are they there still?

Another political dwarf, if we may so designate him, died only a few years ago. Galignani noticed the event in eighteen hundred and fifty-eight. The dwarf's name was Richebourg. He was only twenty-four inches high. When young he was in the service of the Duchess of Orleans, wife of the duke in the days of the French Revolution, and mother of the duke who was afterwards King Louis Philippe. In the desperate troubles of those days Richebourg was, on one occasion, dressed up as a baby, and carried in a nurse's arms, with important despatches concealed in his baby-cap. One would like to know more of this little fellow. That the Orleans family pensioned him off with three thousand francs per annum, and that he died in the Rue du Four St. Germain at the venerable age of ninety, are the only additional facts mentioned; but it would be pleasant to know how the manœuvre succeeded, and whether the tiny diplomatist poked his small person into any other of the momentous events of those times.

There was a little couple in the time of Charles the Second, who compensated for shortness of stature by length of days. They were Richard and Anne Gibson. Richard had been miniature-painter to Charles the First, and was also installed into the office and dignity of court dwarf. Anne was, at the same time, court dwarf to Queen Henrietta Maria. The king determined that the little people should be man and wife. It was done, and he gave away the bride. Waller, the court poet, celebrated the nuptials in the following lines:

> Design or chance make others wive,
> But Nature did this match contrive;
> Eve might as well have Adam fled,
> As she denied her little bed
> To him, for Heaven seemed to frame
> And measure out this little dame!
>
>
>
> To him the fairest nymphs do show,
> Like moving mountains topp'd with snow;
> And ev'ry man a Polypheme
> Does to his Galatea seem!

The little people had a remarkably happy life of it—if not absolutely "healthy and wealthy and wise," at least, something like it. They had nine children, five of whom lived to be men and women, of the ordinary height. Richard, born during the reign of James the First, saw the glories and the troubles of Charles the First, Cromwell, Charles the Second, and James the Second, and died early in the reign of William and Mary. Rather late in life he became drawing-master to the Princesses Mary and Anne, afterwards queens. He died at the age of seventy-five, while his pocket-edition of a wife survived to eighty-nine. They were each under four feet in height; it is even said that they could only muster seven feet of stature between them.

Peter the Great, who had something of the Russian bear in his disposition, on one occasion made merry with all the dwarfs living within a certain range of his capital. He collected seventy of them, and caused one horse to draw a dozen of them at a time in a carriage, to raise a laugh at their smallness. He ordered a marriage between two of the number. All the guests were served with small articles of food, small tables, small knives and spoons. The bridegroom, thirty-eight inches high, danced a minuet, and the Czar was delighted. It is related that, when the guests were about to take their seats at the banquet, they quarrelled for precedence, and maintained their individual dignity, as warmly as people of larger growth.

Poland and Russia have been rather celebrated for dwarfs. Porter noticed the fact in the last century. In his Travels in Russia and Sweden, he said: "Dwarfs are here the pages and playthings of the great, and, at almost all entertainments, stand for hours by their master's chair, holding his snuff-box, or awaiting his commands. There is scarcely a nobleman in this country who is not possessed of one or more of these freaks of nature. These little beings are generally the gayest dressed persons in the service of their lord, and are attired in a uniform or livery of very costly materials. In the presence of their owner their usual station is at his elbow, in the character of a page; and, during his absence, they are responsible for the cleanliness and combed locks of their companions of the canine species. . . . They are generally well-shaped, and their hands and feet particularly graceful. Indeed, in the proportion of their figures, we should never discover them to be flaws in the economy of nature, were it not for a certain peculiarity of features, and the size of the head, which is commonly exceedingly

large. Take them in the whole, they are such compact, and even pretty, little beings, that no idea of them can be formed from the clumsy, deformed dwarfs which are exhibited at our fairs in England. It is very curious to observe how nearly they resemble each other; their features are all so alike that you might easily imagine that one pair had spread their progeny over the whole country."

One of the most notable of these Polish dwarfs, in the last century, was Joseph Borulawski, generally known as Count Borulawski. He was born in seventeen hundred and thirty-nine. He was one of six brothers and sisters. Three of the brothers were all about the middle height. The eldest, born eleven years before Joseph, was a strong and vigorous little fellow, only forty-two inches in height; he became page and then confidential steward to Countess Inalawski. The sister was a much smaller specimen of humanity; perhaps the smallest woman who ever fell in love—for she *did* love, and secretly befriended the young officer to whom she never told her love, lest he should ridicule her. Amiable and pretty, the tiny creature, who is credited with only twenty-six inches of stature, died in her twenty-second year. As to Joseph, he became an European celebrity. He was only eight inches long, when born; and so determined did Nature seem to keep him small, that she only allowed him fourteen inches at one year old, and seventeen inches at six years. Having been neglected by his parents, the Countess de Tarnow educated him. Another Polish lady, the Countess Humieski, begged him of her, and he became quite a pet. He went to Podolia, and lived in a castle, where he attained a stature of twenty-one inches at ten years old, and twenty-five inches at fifteen. His protectress took him for a tour to the European courts. They went to Vienna, where the Empress Maria Theresa wished to present him with a diamond ring from her finger; but this being far too large, she gave him a ring from the finger of Marie Antoinette, afterwards the unfortunate Queen of France, then about six years old. The little man was by that time twenty-eight inches in his stockings. Count Kaunitz, the minister, very much petted him; but there was a feeling growing up in the mind of Borulawski that, after all, he was only treated as a toy—an amusing curiosity—and he had his moments of mortification. Then they went to Munich, and then to Paris, where the court chroniclers told of his symmetrical proportions, his fine eyes, his lively aspect, his healthy constitution, his temperate habits (rather a novelty in those days), his sound sleep, his graceful dancing, his polished manners, his smart repartees, his intelligent conversation, his good memory, his sound judgment, his susceptible feelings, his self-respect, his kindly disposition. One evening, Count Oginski served up Borulawski in a tureen, at a banquet, much to the surprise and amusement of the guests. At the age of twenty-five, Borulawski, then thirty-five inches high, settled at Warsaw with his patroness. He fell in love with a French actress; she pretended to favour his suit, but made merry at his expense behind his back—this was deeply wounding to the little man. At thirty years old he was thirty-nine inches high, and then he stopped growing. At the age of forty he again fell into the toils of love—this time with an amiable and beautiful woman, who, after some hesitation, married him. This proceeding so offended the Countess Humieski, that she dismissed him from her suite. He had to begin the world again, with his wife and a baby; and hard work he found it, for the great (as they are called) did not look so smilingly upon him as before. He travelled about Europe, first as a concert-giver, then as a superior kind of showman, exhibiting himself for money. It was a sore wound to his feelings; but there was no help for it. He fought on bravely and honourably. He was introduced to the English royal family at about the time when the elder sons of George the Third were growing up to manhood.

Borulawski was contemporary with another Polish dwarf, far inferior to him in all bodily and mental characteristics. This was Nicholas Feny, who assumed the name of Bébé. When born he was only eight inches long, and weighed twelve ounces; he was carried on a plate to church to be christened, and his first cradle was his father's wooden shoe. At eighteen months he was able to walk, and at two years old he had a pair of shoes made for him, an inch and a half long. At six years old, when fifteen inches high, he was introduced to Stanislaus, King of Poland, who gave him the name of Bébé. The Princess of Talmond was appointed to teach him; but he was as small in intellect as in stature, and could learn very little. Moreover, he was passionate. When Borulawski went to visit the king, the two dwarfs gazed at each other, and the king made a remark as to the mental superiority of Borulawski; this put Bébé into such a passion that he tried to push the other into the fire—a proceeding that brought a flogging upon Bébé. He became prematurely old and withered, and died at the age of twenty-three; all accounts giving him a height of thirty-three inches at the time of his death. The king planned a marriage between Bébé and Anne Therese Souvray, a native of the Vosges; but Bébé died before the union was effected. There were two sisters, Anne Therese and Barbe, one thirty-three inches high, and the other forty-one; they lived to be old women, and danced and sang national songs in public.

Wybrand Lolkes, the Dutch dwarf, acquired in his day some renown. He was one of eight children of a poor fisherman. He learned watch-making at Amsterdam, and then carried on the trade at Rotterdam. Failing in business, he resolved to get a living out of his smallness. He came to London in the time of old Astley, and was engaged at the Amphitheatre. His wife (for he had a wife and three children) used to lead him on the stage, and had to stoop, that her hand might touch his. He was clumsy and awkward, but agile and strong. When sixty

years of age, he was only twenty-seven inches high. There is a portrait extant of him, with his well-looking, good-sized wife beside him.

HALF A MILLION OF MONEY.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "BARBARA'S HISTORY."

CHAPTER LXXII. WHAT TO DO NEXT.

THERE are some emergencies in which men must and can only turn to their own thoughts for guidance—emergencies in which the least experienced are better able to help themselves than others are to help them; in which the wisest counsel from without is of less value than that counsel which comes from within. Such was Saxon's position when he made the cruel discovery of his cousin's baseness. He was stunned—crushed—bewildered. He neither knew how to act, nor what to think. A change and a shadow seemed all at once to have come over the face of the heavens. That simple faith in his fellow-man which had made wealth so pleasant, life so sweet, the present so sunny, and the future so fair, was shaken suddenly to its foundations. He felt like one who is overtaken by an earthquake. Where his home stood but a moment before, there is now a heap of fallen masonry. Where his garden lay, all bright with trees and flowers, there is now but a yawning chasm. He dreads to move, to stand still, to go backward or forward, lest the ground should open and swallow him. There is nothing before him, nothing behind him, but ruin.

As he had told Castletowers in the first outbreak of his trouble, it was not, indeed, "the money" that he lamented. He would have given more than he had lost to believe again in William Trefalden, and know him for "a good man and true." It was not the money. He scarcely thought of it. He was rich without it. Perhaps—for he was beginning to loathe the wealth which had wrought all this evil—he should have been richer still if he had never possessed it. No—it was that he had, in his simple, manly, hearty way, truly loved his cousin—loved him, looked up to him, trusted him implicitly. It was that he had been, all along, the mere blind victim of a gigantic fraud, deliberately planned, mercilessly carried forward, callously consummated. This was the blow. This was the wrong. This was "the pity of it!"

He had to bear it, to fight through it, to think it out for himself. He had, above all, to consider what he should do next. That was the great problem—what to do next.

For he was determined not to have recourse to the law. He had made up his mind to that from the first. The money might go—was gone, probably. At all events, he would never foul the Trefalden name in a public court, or drag the man whom he had called by the sacred name of "friend" before a public tribunal. At the same time, however, might it not yet be possible to recover some portion of the money? William Trefalden believed him to be in Norway, and, doubtless calculated on the three months which Saxon had laid out for his northern trip. Was it not, at all events, possible that the lawyer had not yet taken flight?

The more Saxon thought about it, the more he became convinced that his wisest course would be to hasten back to London, confront his cousin, and wrest from him whatever might yet be recoverable of the stolen millions. There were great improbabilities in the way; but even in the face of these improbabilities, the effort was worth making.

And then there was the Castletowers mortgage but Saxon had already considered how that difficulty might be met.

Poor young fellow! He lay awake all night turning these things over in his mind; and in the morning, as soon as Alexandria was awake and stirring, he went down without even knocking at Lord Castletowers' door as he passed by, and out into the streets.

When he came back to breakfast, his face wore a bright look of decision and purpose.

"I have been down to the landing-place, Castletowers," he said, "looking after the Albula, and making some inquiries of the people about the quays. I think I ought to give up this Mediterranean tour, and go back to England."

"I am sure of it," replied the Earl. "I was about to suggest it to you myself, if you had not proposed it."

"And 'if 'twere well 'twere done,'" said Saxon, "'twere well 'twere done quickly.'"

"You will go by steamer, of course?"

"I would if I could; but the French mail left yesterday, and the Overland packet will not be due till next week; so the best and only thing to be done is to stick to the yacht for the present. The wind is direct in our favour; the Albula will skim along like a gull; and by pushing forward at once to Malta, we may catch one of the Italian boats. At all events, we shall not be standing still; and even to be moving is something, when one is so intolerably restless."

"I am ready to start with you this very moment," said the Earl.

"Thank you," replied Saxon, with a sigh. "You must come back here, you know, when you have got rid of me, and go on to Cairo and the Pyramids, as we had intended before this happened."

"Without you?"

"Why not? I shall, of course, leave the yacht in your charge."

The Earl shook his head.

"No, no, Trefalden," he said. "The yacht can be sent home in the care of the master; but you and I must certainly not part company, unless you feel you had rather be without me."

"That's impossible; but"

"But me no buts. Solitary travelling has no charm for me. If you reject my society, I shall simply go home to Castletowers as fast as I can."

So it was agreed that the friends should embark without an hour's delay, making direct for the nearest port in which a Marseilles steamer was likely to be found.

CHAPTER LXXIII. HOMEWARD BOUND.

That fate is always adverse to a man in haste, that nothing important in this world is ever to be had at the precise moment when it is most needed, that the train is certain to be half an hour late or the watch ten minutes slow, when every moment is more precious than gold and one's whole being seems to be concentrated on the one act of pushing forward—are facts which call for no evidence beyond that which comes within the circle of each man's experience.

In obedience, then, to what may be called the Law of Hindrances, the Albula just missed the steamer at Valetta by an hour and three-quarters. Being told, however, that by running before the wind to Messina without delay, they would be certain to catch the French mail steam-packet for Marseilles direct, the travellers crowded all sail, and went on. Arrived at Messina, they learned that their boat had started at noon, and would not be due again till that day week. There was now nothing for it but to go on to Naples.

They then landed their Sicilian surgeon, whose services were no longer needed, and again put to sea.

But the wind was no longer directly in their favour, and their progress was consequently so much the slower. Tacking laboriously along the Calabrian coast, they beheld all that wondrous panorama unfold itself before them as they passed. Pæstum, Amalfi, Salerno, Vesuvius, and, at last, the glorious bay, with its sentinel islets lying out to sea.

They landed at the Molo Grande. The white flag of the Bourbon was flying from the twin castles down beside the quays, from the arsenal, and from the mastheads of the steam-frigates in the harbour. There, pacing to and fro upon the pier, were the Neapolitan sentries, with their white-cross belts—those same cross-belts at which Saxon and Castletowers fired so many shots at Melazzo.

They soon found that the boat which they had missed at Messina was, above all others, the one which they should have taken. No other went to Marseilles direct, and no other would go at all for at least forty-eight hours, from the time of their arrival in the harbour. It was now Thursday morning, and the order of departure was as follows: there was the boat of the Messageries Impériales, which left Naples every Tuesday at five P.M.; there was the boat of the Two Sicilies Mail Steam Navigation Company, which went every Wednesday at the same hour; and there were two boats every Saturday, besides the chance of a merchant-steamer, which had no fixed dates for departure, but was expected to be ready about that time. But every one of these packets, without exception, touched at Civita Vecchia, and some touched not only at Civita Vecchia, but also at Genoa and Leghorn.

In short, they could not possibly get off before Saturday at noon, and even then must suffer loss of time by putting in at the Papal port by the way.

However, there was no help for it. Wait one whole day and part of two others, they must; so they determined to make the delay as pleasant as possible, and the Earl undertook to show Saxon all that could be seen of Naples in the time.

How they rattled down to Pompeii by rail; dined on the Chiaja; heard the "Barbière" at the San Carlo; supped in the open air on the terrace of the Albergo della Villa di Roma; ate mattoni ices and maccaroni to their hearts' content; and wandered on the Molo, watching the red glow above Vesuvius long after those hours at which more reasonable travellers are in their beds—needs no recapitulation here.

To a stranger, the fair city seemed all careless security, all mirth, all holiday. Who that knew not every inflection of the popular voice, every flash of the popular humour, could have guessed that there was revolt at the heart of that shouting, laughing, noisy crowd? Who would have dreamed that the preacher holding forth in the Largo del Mercato was only kept from preaching the "movimento" by the sight of those cross-belts scattered, as if by chance, among the crowd? Or that the Canta Storia on the Molo, chanting his monotonous stanzas to an eager circle of boatmen and lazzaroni, was ready to substitute the name of Garibaldi for that of Rinaldo whenever the sentry was out of hearing? Who would have supposed that in every coffee-shop and trattoria, round every lemonade and maccaroni stall, in front of every mountebank's platform, and in the porch of every church, the one prevailing, absorbing topic upon every lip was the advance of the national army?

Yet so it was. Garibaldi had crossed from Sicily, and landed in Calabria only a few days before, and all Naples was boiling over with hope and exultation. The wildest tales, the most extravagant anticipations were afloat. Every man whispered "Viva Garibaldi!" in his neighbour's ear; but none had yet dared to give voice to the popular watchword. In the mean while, an irrepressible under-current of revolutionary propagandism was beginning to agitate the surface of Neapolitan life. Though not yet apparent to the casual observer, this disposition was perfectly understood by the Neapolitan authorities, who were doing all in their power to keep it down by means of the strong hand. The guns of St. Elmo, the Castel Nuovo, and the Castel dell' Ovo were pointed ominously upon the town. Small bodies of military were constantly perambulating the principal thoroughfares, mingling in every crowd, and loitering about the places of popular resort. Above all,

the little theatre San Carlino, in the Largo del Castello, was shut up. Saxon and Castletowers had gone down there, on their way to the opera, intending to pay a visit to Pulichinello; but they found the doors closed, and a sentry pacing before them. That witty and patriotic puppet had fallen a victim to his political opinions, and was now a state prisoner in his own little theatre.

Such was the condition of Naples when Saxon made his first acquaintance with the beautiful city. The king was still at the Palazzo Reale; the people were in a ferment; and Garibaldi was on the march.

CHAPTER LXXIV. COLONNA'S HAND.

They were going up Vesuvius!

Happy youth, which can forget its cares so easily, and float with every tide! Here were two young men snatching a hasty breakfast on the terrace in front of their hotel, while the carriage which was to convey them to Resina waited at the door. They had risen with the sun; they were in high spirits; they talked more than they ate, and laughed more than either. Who would have supposed that the one had been robbed of half his fortune, and the other rejected by the lady of his love? Who would have supposed that each had a real sorrow at heart? And, above all, who would not covet that healthy elasticity of temper which enabled them to put their troubles aside, and make the best of the sunshiny present?

"Confound the arm!" said the Earl. "I don't know how I am to get up the cone without the help of it!"

"You must be carried," replied Saxon, vigorously attacking a fragrant "bifteck," surrounded by a golden fence of "pommes de terre frites." "It's expensive and ignominious; but I can suggest nothing better."

"Consent to become a parcel?" exclaimed the Earl. "Never. Am I not a man and a biped?"

"Men and bipeds must occasionally do what they don't like to do, I presume, as well as women and quadrupeds," replied Saxon.

"There is one consolatory fact of which I am quite certain," replied the Earl; "and that is, that men and bipeds have the best of the bargain—at all events, in this world."

"Not a doubt of it. What splendid stuff this Lachryma is!"

"There's a poor wretch down there, however, who looks as if his worldly bargain had been bad enough!" said the Earl, tossing a handful of carlini to a beggar who had been mumbling and bowing in the road below, ever since the young men had sat down to breakfast.

The waiter in attendance shrugged his shoulders, and smiled.

"Son' tutti ladroni, signore," said he. "Tutti—tutti!"

The beggar picked up the coins with a great show of gratitude, and called upon a variety of saints to shower down blessings on the giver.

"Good Heavens!" exclaimed Saxon, setting down the glass which he had just raised to his lips.

The Earl looked up in surprise.

"Why, my good fellow," said he, "what is the matter with you? You look as if you had seen a ghost."

But, instead of replying, Saxon turned to the waiter.

"Bring me a cup of strong coffee," he said. "Bring it immediately."

The waiter withdrew. Saxon at once laid his hand on his friend's arm, leaned closer to him, and said in a hurried whisper:

"It's Signor Montecuculi—that Montecuculi whom I saw once at Castletowers!"

"Montecuculi! Where? What do you mean?"

"There—the beggar yonder—don't you see? He has something to say to us!"

"But are you certain?"

"Certain. I saw his face quite plainly. Ha! What's this?"

The beggar had withdrawn a little into the shade of the roadside trees; but a stone came whirring through the air, and crashed down, as Saxon spoke, into the midst of the breakfast-table. There was a paper twisted about it, which the Earl had barely time to secure before the waiter came back. As soon as that functionary could be again dismissed, the young men hastened to examine it.

"Colonna's hand!" exclaimed the Earl, as his eyes fell on the writing.

There were but three or four lines, and they ran thus:

"*In great peril. Concealed near the coast. Enemies on the alert. Bring a sailing boat. Anchor off shore, in a line with the ruins of Cumæ. Be prepared with row-boat, and look out for signals about dusk.*"

"How lucky that we were detained here!" was Saxon's first exclamation.

"We must not think of Vesuvius now," said the Earl.

"Of course not!"

"We can say that we have changed our minds, and prefer a day on the water. It will be easy to cruise about the coast in that direction, fishing, or sketching.

"Nothing easier."

"And we'll get him off, somehow!"

"That we will, in spite of Francesco Secondo!"

CHAPTER LXXV. ORTHODOX BRITISH TOURISTS.

The Albula coasted ostentatiously about the bay all the forenoon, but shortly after mid-day rounded Monte Procida, and cast anchor at the point indicated in Colonna's note.

Her crew was now strengthened by the addition of a small, active, swarthy Italian sailor, with gold rings in his ears, and a scarlet cap upon his head. He was an "odd hand," whom

Saxon had, apparently, picked up upon the quay; and he had not been on board five minutes before he betrayed his utter incapacity to handle a rope. This sailor was Montecuculi.

Himself proscribed and in hourly peril of recognition, he had been for three days vainly trying to get Colonna off from his hiding-place at Cumæ. Finding it impossible, in consequence of the vigilance of the harbour police, to make the attempt by sea, he was in the act of organising an armed expedition by land when he heard that an English yacht had just come into port. Going down himself after dark, he found, to his great joy, that the Albula was Saxon Trefalden's property, and that Lord Castletowers was with him at the Hotel Gran' Bretagna.

"I tried to see you last evening," said he, as they leaned, chatting, over the side of the vessel; "but though I heard of you at many places, I could find you at none. This morning, however, I was determined not to be baffled; so I have been hanging about the Chiaja ever since daybreak."

"It was an act of great imprudence on Colonna's part, to venture over to the mainland before Garibaldi was in Naples," said the Earl.

"Imprudence! It was madness. Nothing less. I have been in Naples myself for the last three weeks, attending the meetings of our secret societies, and distributing the Dictator's proclamations; but then I am known only to our own people, and there is no price upon my head. I heard some days ago that Colonna had been seen at Gaeta; but I did not believe it."

"At Gaeta!" repeated the Earl. "Nay, what could he expect, save danger, in a royalist stronghold like Gaeta?"

"What, indeed! Ma che volete? He has been running his head into the lion's mouth all his life."

"Heaven grant that he may not have done so once too often!"

"Were it not that no hand on earth could imitate his writing," said Montecuculi, "I should have suspected a trap; but of the genuineness of his note, there can be no doubt."

"How did it reach you?" asked the Earl.

"It was left for me, somewhat mysteriously, at the little trattoria where I dine. The messenger was a boy whom nobody knew, and he merely gave it in without a word, and ran away."

"But what was Signor Colonna doing at Gaeta?" asked Saxon.

The Italian shrugged his shoulders significantly.

"Garibaldi has only to enter Naples by one gate for Francesco to walk out by the other," replied he; "and Gaeta gave shelter to the Pope ten years ago. It is a difficult place to deal with, and, of course, if it *could* be gained over beforehand, our position would be materially strengthened. But Colonna was not the man for such an expedition. A less precious life should have been hazarded."

"I wonder where he is now!" said the Earl taking an anxious survey of the coast through his glass.

"I think I can guess," replied Montecuculi. "You see that volcanic hill lying back yonder from the shore? That is the Acropolis of Cumæ; and a regiment might find hiding-room in the mysterious caves and passages with which it is perforated in every direction."

"I think I can see them," exclaimed Saxon. "They look like rabbit-burrows."

"There are hundreds of them—all hewn in the solid tufa. They were ancient beyond all record in the time of Virgil; and no one knows whither they lead, or by what hands they were excavated."

It was now proposed that Saxon and Castletowers should land on pretext of sketching, leaving the Albula at anchor about half a mile from shore. They put off accordingly in the small boat, taking Saxon's English sailor with them, and leaving Montecuculi on board the yacht.

The shore was flat and marshy, fringed with tall reeds, and scattered over with fragments of very ancient masonry. Among these reeds they moored their boat, and, landing, found themselves face to face with a Neapolitan sentry.

Up till this moment, no human creature had been visible along the lonely coast. Scanning it carefully from the deck of the Albula and detecting no sign of life for miles on either side, they had said to each other that nothing would be easier than to bring off the fugitive in open day; yet no sooner had they set foot upon the sand than their friend's danger stood bodily before them in the shape of an armed sentinel.

The man neither challenged them nor opposed their landing; but stood by, leaning on his musket, quiet and observant. Saxon and Castletowers, on the other hand, with an air of the utmost unconcern, lit their cigars, and began looking about for a favourable point of view.

Presently the Earl went up to the sentry, and addressed him.

"Scusate, amico," said he, "but what hill is that yonder?"

"E la rocca di Cumæ, signore," replied the soldier.

"Cumæ?" repeated the Earl.

"Si, signore. Cumæ antico."

"Grazie molte," said Castletowers, and immediately pulled a book from his pocket, and began reading. The book was Childe Harold; but the last edition of Murray could not have answered his purpose better. The sentry concluded it was a guide-book, set down the new comers as inoffensive tourists, and took no further notice of them.

They then wandered a little way up the shore till they came to a clump of pines, in the shade of which they sat down. Here Saxon, who was, in truth, no artist, proceeded to make a sketch.

Presently another sentry made his appearance. Like the first, he seemed to rise out of the very earth, and yet made no show of watchfulness.

Having paced slowly past the pine clump twice or thrice, he withdrew to a point of rising ground about a quarter of a mile distant, and there took up his position.

"Trefalden," said the Earl, "we are watched."

"Evidently."

"What is to be done?"

"Heaven knows!"

"It is my belief that the place swarms with soldiers."

"And I feel as if the very air were full of eyes and ears."

"Poor Colonna!"

Then, for a few moments, they were both silent.

"I'll tell you what I think we must do, Castletowers," said Saxon. "Seem to sail away, and then come back again at dusk."

Despite his anxiety, the Earl could not forbear a smile.

"Decidedly, my friend," said he, "you have no genius for intrigue."

"Isn't my plan a good one?"

"It is the most artless artifice that ever oozed from an honest brain. No, no. We must do something much more cunning than that."

"Then I fear you will have to invent it."

"I think I have done so already. You must go on sketching for a few hours longer. We must then pretend to be hungry"

"No need for pretence on my part," said Saxon. "I am frightfully hungry now."

"You will have to fast for some time, then, because it is my object to prolong our stay here till dusk; and, in order to do that, we must drive off the dinner question to the last moment. Having done this, we will go up boldly to one of the sentries, inquire our way to the nearest inn, and get something to eat. By the time we have dined, it will be dusk. Colonna will then only have to steal down to the shore and hide himself in our boat; and the object for which we are here will be triumphantly accomplished."

"It seems to me," said Saxon, "that we should have done better had we followed Colonna's own instructions more closely, and not come till after sunset."

The Earl shook his head.

"Our only course," he replied, "was to land openly—to sketch, and idle, and play the orthodox British tourist. By doing this, we disarm suspicion; by stealing along the coast after sunset, we should infallibly have aroused the suspicions of every royalist within half a dozen miles of the place."

"I dare say you are right," said Saxon; "but, in the mean while, I am starving."

"I fear you must continue to starve for the present."

"Then, I beg you to understand that I decline to sit still under the treatment. Suppose we go over the ruins."

"Will you not finish your sketch first?"

"My sketch!" ejaculated Saxon, contemptuously. "Pshaw! my sketches are the most unsatisfactory daubs in the world. The more I finish them, the worse they get. If I had put this down half an hour ago, it would have been ever so much better than it is now."

The Earl still hesitated. Not knowing where Colonna might be hidden, he doubted whether they ought to go up to the ruins or not. At last they decided that orthodox British tourists would be certain to see all that could be seen; and so went across the broiling plain and up to the foot of the Cumæan Mount. Arrived, however, at the Arco Felice, they were met by a third sentry, who interposed his bayonet somewhat unceremoniously between them and the gate. The ruins, he said, were closed to the public, and could only be seen by order of the Royal Chamberlain.

They tried expostulation, they tried bribery; but in vain. The man was immovable. So Saxon had to make another sketch, and then another, to pass the time away.

At length the day began to decline, and the Earl judged that they might proceed to the second step in their plan. So they went back to the sentinel at the Arco Felice, and inquired if he knew where they might purchase something to eat.

The soldier shrugged his shoulders, and believed there was no albergo nearer than Patria.

"How far are we from Patria?" asked the Earl.

"About eight miles."

"Eight miles! But, amico, we have not eaten since breakfast—we are starving. Is there no farm-house near at hand?"

"Oh, sicuro. There is a podere about a quarter of an hour hence."

"In which direction?"

"Following the coast-road towards Liternum."

"A thousand thanks. Good evening, amico."

"Buona sera, signore."

With this, the young men turned away, and hastened in the direction indicated.

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AT THE BAR.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "A CRUISE UPON WHEELS," &c. &c.

CHAPTER XX. THE PERIL INCREASES.

At the appointed hour on the afternoon of the eventful day with which we have been so long occupied, the doctor of the police force arrived, accompanied by a surgeon of some eminence, who was to assist Dr. Giles in his investigation. It lasted some hours, and all the time there was a strange and ominous quiet about the house, a silence which no one cared to break.

At last it was announced that the work was accomplished, and that the doctors had come down stairs into the dining-room, and wished to speak with Mr. Penmore. He found them looking very grave, and there was an awkward silence.

"I am sorry to say, Mr. Penmore," began Dr. Giles at last, after introducing his colleague, a pale, studious-looking gentleman in spectacles, "that both my friend Mr. Slade and myself have come, in consequence of the investigations in which we have just been engaged, to a somewhat painful conclusion. There must be an inquest."

"An inquest?" repeated Gilbert, in some dismay. "Is there any doubt, then, about the cause of death?"

"I am afraid, Mr. Penmore," replied the doctor, "that, on the contrary, there is no doubt whatever that the cause of death has been the administration of poison."

"Of what?" cried Gilbert, surprised beyond all possibility of self-restraint.

"Of poison," repeated Dr. Giles, gravely.

There was a dead silence for some minutes after this. Gilbert required time to collect himself a little, and no doubt both the doctors felt that this must be so, for they left him awhile undisturbed.

"What you have told me," said Gilbert at last, speaking in a low tone, "has so entirely taken me by surprise, and the announcement is altogether so terrible, that I hardly know what I ought to say or do." He stopped for a time. "Have you found out what the poison was?" he asked presently.

"We have no doubt whatever that the poison which has been administered is opium. That is your opinion, too, Slade, is it not?"

"Beyond a doubt," replied Mr. Slade. "We have detected its presence quite unmistakably, and in somewhat large quantity."

Again there was silence. These men spoke with certainty and confidence. Yet Gilbert could hardly realise that what they said was truth. At last he spoke again:

"Have you formed any opinion as to how or by whom this poison has been administered?"

Dr. Giles *had* formed an opinion, and a tolerably strong one too, in his own mind, but he could not bring himself to give it tongue. It was too dreadful to be put into words. His colleague was not slow in coming to his rescue.

"As to that," said Mr. Slade, "it would be impossible, and, indeed, extremely wrong as well, to form any conclusion, or even to entertain a suspicion, till after the inquest has taken place."

"Quite impossible to say anything till then," remarked Dr. Giles.

"And when shall that be?" asked Penmore.

"I think, if possible, it had better be to-morrow," said the doctor; "and, unless you wish to put the affair in any other hands, I will see the coroner on the subject myself, and save you the trouble and annoyance."

"You are very kind. I will ask you to do so," said Gilbert.

"I think to-morrow will probably be the day appointed," continued Dr. Giles; "but you shall know in the course of the evening."

The two medical gentlemen rose to go, but at this moment the door opened, and Mrs. Penmore entered the room, followed closely by her evil genius, Jane Cantanker. Gabrielle made at once for the spot where her husband stood. She was deadly pale, and looked continually over her shoulder at this woman, with the appearance of one who is scared and terrified.

Both the doctors made way to allow Mrs. Penmore to pass.

"What is the matter, Gabrielle?" asked Penmore, kindly. "I am afraid that this affair has frightened you terribly."

Gabrielle could only press her husband's arm. Her eyes were still fixed upon the woman who hated her.

"I wish to know," said this last, addressing the two doctors, "whether *she*"—and Cantanker

pointed to Gabrielle—"is to be allowed to go at large?"

"Most unquestionably," replied both the medical authorities, speaking together. "How can you ask? There is nothing against her, at present."

"'Nothing against her?' I tell you there is my word against her. I accuse her—here, before you all! *You* know," continued the infuriated woman, turning to the doctor—"you know on what grounds I speak, and *on* those grounds I denounce this woman as guilty of having caused my mistress's death."

No person, of those present, heard those dreadful words unmoved. Both the doctors showed, by their faces and by gesture as well, that even to them, inured to scenes of wretchedness, this was no common case. For Gabrielle, a deadly sickness came upon her, and, with a faint cry, so weak as to be hardly audible, she clung to Gilbert for support; while, as to Penmore himself, all other feeling now seemed to be utterly lost and merged in one of furious and unmitigated indignation.

"What!" he cried; "is this to be allowed? Is this abominable and shameless woman to stand here before me, and in my own house accuse my own wife of a crime, which, as connected with her, I cannot even bring myself to name? Have I no remedy but slow recourse to processes for libel and such creeping means of vengeance? Because she is a woman, I can use no force. I cannot tear out the very tongue with which she lies against this innocent. Oh! it is horrible to be so tied and bound, to stand by, inactive, and listen to such words. But what folly is this?" he said, checking himself the next moment. "To treat this matter seriously, even for a moment, is nothing less than folly of the wildest kind. The woman is mad. Mad with grief—mad with hatred of my wife—which I could see she always entertained. Yes, she is mad, but it is a madness with which I cannot bear that my wife should come in contact. Can she not be removed, sir?" he continued, addressing Dr. Giles.

"Nothing shall make me stir from this place," said this terrible woman, speaking for herself, "till I have seen *her* in the way of being brought to justice."

"I am afraid," said Doctor Giles, "that whatever may be your own convictions as to this person's state of mind, her accusations have been so serious, and she has altogether gone so far in what she has asserted, that it will be necessary for all parties concerned that she should have a hearing, and that her story should be pronounced upon by some one who has the right to speak."

"And this you may rely on," the woman went on, "in spite of all your words of scorn and talking about madness, that when once I have got a hearing, it will be long enough before you hear the last of what I have to say. I tell you that your wife—and if she were twenty times your wife, or the highest lady in the land, it could make no difference—I tell you she is guilty. Why, look," continued the illiterate wretch, "at what happened last night—she carrying up my mistress's food the last thing, and the poor angel dead in the morning. Ah! you may well shrink, young woman, but you'll shrink more yet before I've done—I can tell you."

It was impossible that this woman's denunciations should be allowed to go on. Doctor Giles came forward now, and, speaking to Jane Cantanker, said:

"I think that it will be better for you to keep what you have to say till to-morrow, when you are certain of a hearing. You can do no good by speaking now."

The good doctor was greatly distressed at the scene in which he was perforce taking part, and he felt that if any additional pain could be spared to this lady and gentleman—for such he perceived them to be—such vexation ought certainly to be averted. Mr. and Mrs. Penmore should be left alone at this time, he thought, to bear this trouble together.

"Come with me," he said, addressing the relentless woman once more. "I have some additional questions of importance which I should like to ask you."

"Begging your pardon, sir, I will answer your questions at another time. What I have to do now is to see that this person is brought to justice."

Gilbert felt his wife's arm tremble as these horrid words were spoken. It maddened him to hear them, and to think that it was possible that they could be said in earnest.

"I say that I will not have this," he cried. "If this madness is to have its way—if this woman is to be allowed to speak words which, if the subject were less terrible, one might almost smile at—at least it shall not be here in my own house, but elsewhere, and before some fitly constituted tribunal. In this house, at least, I am the master. I bid her leave this room, and if she refuses, it being impossible to use force, I at least will leave it, and this lady with me, as I do not choose that my wife should any longer be brought in contact with a wretch who could speak such words against her."

"Which way is it to be?" continued Penmore, after waiting a moment. "Is she to go or are we?"

The two doctors both came forward, and in earnest accents sought to turn this iron woman from her purpose.

She did not stir, however, and Gilbert, after giving her such time as he deemed sufficient, drew his wife's arm through his, and without another word passed swiftly from the room.

It was some time after they had got away from the room below, before either Gilbert or his wife uttered a word. Strange and terrible thoughts filled the minds of both of them; a new and dreadful impression was developing itself slowly. It was as if a scroll on which some fearful thing was written, was being unrolled gradually before their terror-stricken eyes. What was written on that scroll was confused and unmeaning at

first, but as they gazed, the characters assumed a certain clearness and coherency, becoming at last intelligible. The forms seen dimly in the darkness took shape now, and grim and ghastly forms they were.

Gilbert was the first to break the silence.

"What did that dreadful woman mean?" he asked. "What—what," and here he hesitated in spite of himself—"was that she said about last night?"

The events of that past day and night were ranging themselves in order in Gabrielle's mind as her husband spoke. Every little thing that had taken place was being repeated before her mental vision.

"Oh, Gilbert," she cried, "what have I done? I do not even dare to think of what may come of it."

"Come of what?" he repeated mechanically. He would not own to himself even that he knew.

"Of all that took place yesterday," continued Gabrielle; "of the words that passed between us—the angry words, and then what followed. That last food which she partook of coming through my hands, and after that—her—her DEATH."

Penmore could not repress a groan of anguish. With his quick perception and legal training he could not help seeing how easily what had happened on the previous day might be misrepresented, and what a fearful strength of evidence might thus be accumulated against his wife.

"Will they kill me, Gilbert?" she asked. "What will they do to me?"

Her husband gazed at her as if hardly understanding what she said.

"They will suspect you, that is what I fear," he answered at last. "The horrible coherency with which these things hang together, may make them suspect you, and that is bad enough—bad enough," he repeated.

They sat side by side silent for a while, their cold hands locked together. There was much of the boy and girl about them still. They had sat so in the old West Indian time, when their first sorrow, the dread of separation, had come upon them.

The husband seemed now to be almost the greater sufferer of the two. From time to time a sort of shudder passed through all his frame. He seemed unable to help dwelling on those dreadful and damning circumstances. "Great Heaven!" he cried, but faintly, and as if some hideous sight were revealed to his eyes, "what evidence in wicked hands;" and then he repeated, as if it were some dreadful refrain, those words, "The last food partaken of at night, by her who was to die before the morning."

Gabrielle uttered a faint cry. The same thoughts which had passed through her husband's mind were in hers also. Link by link the great chain of evidence which might be turned against her, seemed to become developed before the eyes of both husband and wife.

"Oh, Gilbert," cried the latter after a time, "you will not hate me for what I have done. I don't mean what I have done; you can't hate me for that, because I only sought to make my peace with her, but for the dreadful consequences, the disgrace that may come of it. Oh, Gilbert, darling, whatever I may have to suffer, let it not be in one way, dear, not in losing you, my love. You will still love me and trust me whatever happens, will you not, and never let even one unkind thought come between us to separate us?"

Gilbert caught her in his arms before she could say more, and reassured her with such loving words as made her happy even in the midst of all this anxiety and misery. They were together, and they loved each other, and while this was so, they could not be utterly unhappy.

They sat silent and full of thought for some time, and might have continued so much longer, had they not been disturbed by various strange noises below in the passage, and the sound of voices and of a suppressed sobbing.

CHAPTER XXI. AFFECTIONATE RELATIVES.

It was just as the light was fading fast on the evening of this dreadful day, that a cab, heavily laden with luggage, drove up to the door of the house in Beaumont-street. The head of a good-looking gentleman was thrust out of one of the windows of the vehicle, and then, as if he were impatient, his arm followed, and his hand turned the handle of the cab door.

The contents of the cab seemed to indicate less that the occupant had come off a journey than that he was making a move from one place of residence to another, for, although there were not wanting certain boxes and portmanteaus on the roof of the cab, that vehicle was also loaded both outside and in with a great many such knick-knacks as sofa-cushions, chimney-piece ornaments, large meerschaum pipes, and other similar articles, which people do not usually carry about with them loose, when travelling. Above all, there was in the interior of the cab a pair of very handsome kettle-drums, and about these the owner was so solicitous that, as soon as he was out of the conveyance, he caused them to be brought out also, and placed beside him on the stone before the door, which a moment afterwards was opened by no less a person than Jane Cantanker.

Mr. Lethwaite, whom the drums have doubtless already proclaimed to the reader, was so solicitous about these instruments, that, without observing who had let him in, he at once bore them with the tenderest care into the house, and deposited them in a place of safety behind the dining-room door.

"Are the rooms ready for me?" asked Lethwaite, turning round as soon as he thought the drums were safe, and not perceiving in the dusk of the evening whom he was addressing.

"No, sir—they are not," replied a voice, which Lethwaite recognised immediately; "and any-

thing so indecent as this, I could not have believed would have taken place, even in *this* ill-regulated house."

Mr. Lethwaite stood in great fear of Cantanker. "I beg your pardon, I'm sure," he said, with his native politeness; "I am extremely sorry. I was told to come to-day."

"Oh yes, no doubt; *they* knew what was going to happen, and they didn't want to have their rooms unlet for so much as a single hour. But it's all of a piece—it's all of a piece. There, you'd better go up-stairs, hadn't you, and take your drums with you? You'll find them up there as you won't easily disturb. Oh, Lord! oh, Lord! that I should live to see this day." And the wretched woman burst into a fit of suppressed sobbing, and disappeared down the kitchen stairs.

It was an unfortunate coincidence this, truly. Gilbert had told his friend that the rooms would be vacant, and had appointed him to come, and then, in the agitation and confusion of what had happened since, had forgotten all about it, as well he might. It was unfortunate, too, that the door should have been opened on this occasion by Cantanker herself. The fact is, that she had been waiting for some time in the passage, expecting the arrival of *something*—something that generally arrives in the dusk of the evening—the last piece of furniture that any of us have need of in this world. Expecting that, she had opened the door, and then she had found Mr. Lethwaite with his drums. In this world the grotesque intrudes everywhere, cheek by jowl, with the terrible, and no true narrator of earthly sorrows is he who denies that ghastly element its place.

The noise made by the arrival of Lethwaite's luggage, the sound of voices and of sobbing, had, as we have seen, reached—for sound travels easily in cheaply-built houses—to the room where Gilbert and his wife were sitting.

Penmore came out upon the landing to ascertain what new thing was amiss, and hearing Lethwaite's voice, the memory of what he had told his friend about the rooms being ready for a new tenant on this very day, flashed upon him, and, in one moment, he understood what was going on below.

He went down stairs at once, and found Julius Lethwaite in the passage, ignorant still of what had happened, and entirely confused and bewildered at the reception which he had met with.

"Good Heavens, Penmore!" he cried, alarmed, as well he might be, at his friend's altered appearance," what can be the matter?"

It was soon told. It was not indeed necessary to speak of those alarming presentiments with which Gilbert and his wife had just been occupied. Time enough for those when it should be proved that there was ground for such apprehensions. Time enough to-morrow, when the jury should have assembled, and pronounced their verdict. It was enough now to tell the sad story of Miss Carrington's sudden death, together with the cause to which that death was attributed by the medical man.

Lethwaite was sincerely distressed at what he heard. He foresaw hindrance, and trouble, and inconvenience—though of course, at present, nothing more—for his friend; and his offers of service were so anxiously put, that Penmore actually gave him some small commission to execute, in order to set him at rest.

Julius Lethwaite was a man of infinite tact, and he saw in a moment, that just for the moment, the kindest thing he could do would be to go. So in a very few minutes the cab which had deposited him in Beaumont-street was loaded again, and he was soon on his way—drums and all—back to the place from whence he came, and where he knew that he could still find shelter for the present.

And there were many demands made now upon Penmore's attention which served, perhaps usefully, to distract it from those melancholy forebodings which had taken such a hold upon his mind. First came a messenger to announce that the coroner would hold an inquest on the morrow at a neighbouring public-house, at two o'clock in the afternoon. The jury would have to visit the house in Beaumont-street, and it was requested that all things might be in readiness for their reception.

Soon after this message had been received, Captain Scraper made his appearance. Rumours of what had happened had reached him, and the boarding-house where, it will be remembered, the deceased lady had several friends, was all in commotion about the affair. Captain Scraper took a very important tone, and, horrible as it seems to say so, actually appeared to have a great relish for what was going on, and to find considerable consolation in uttering a great many big phrases about its being a "most mysterious affair," and as to the "necessity of investigation." And he even seemed to be disposed to give Gilbert himself a hint or two as to what had best be his own course of conduct, and how it would be right for him to "communicate at once with the late Miss Carrington's relations," and to "lose no time in applying to her men of business, whoever they might be," without once pausing to inquire whether or no some such steps might not already have been taken. There was a certain quiet dignity, however, about the manner in which Penmore informed the captain that all these things which he had been kind enough to suggest, had already been attended to, which had a considerable effect in subduing the military gentleman's tone. Gilbert Penmore was the kindest and gentlest creature breathing, but from the moment that he had reason to suspect that any one was taking a liberty with him, he became a very different person, and very difficult to deal with.

And lastly, the captain being disposed of, came no less a person than Mr. Jephson, of the firm of Jephson and Field, Miss Carrington's solicitors. Mr. Jephson, it will perhaps be remembered,

was one of that party of attorneys whom Julius Lethwaite had got together to meet our hero, and who had laughed at his foreign accent as did the rest. The information brought by this asthmatic gentleman was not altogether satisfactory. He knew of no will. If there was one, it must be among Miss Carrington's papers that had been in her own possession. There certainly was none among the documents in the possession of the firm which he represented. At the proper time it would be necessary to make an examination of the deceased lady's papers with a view to the discovery of a will. In the event of no such document being found, her property would go to her next of kin.

A new source of uneasiness became revealed to Gilbert Penmore as those last words dropped casually from the attorney's lips. To the best of Gilbert's knowledge, he himself and his own immediate relatives would turn out to be the persons thus alluded to, and if thus a benefit should actually accrue to him from Miss Carrington's death, here would be more ground at once for those suspicions which had been insinuated by Jane Cantanker; a new link, in short, in that horrible chain which circumstances seemed to be winding around his poor Gabrielle, encroaching like the coils of a serpent on her freedom, and even—on what besides?—on her life?

Oh! truly it might be so—who could tell? Who could say whither all these cruel indications were tending, or in what direction they pointed?

This new feature in the case did really seem to be all that was wanting to complete it as a piece of the strongest circumstantial evidence that could be conceived. Here was additional motive for a crime brought forward in the shape of profit to be obtained by its commission. Before this new element had been introduced, the motive which might have been alleged was purely of a vindictive character, but now here was a distinct advantage to be gained by the death of this unfortunate lady. Her life stood between a certain person and gain, and that life had been successfully assailed by a dose of poison. Such proof against the person to be profited by the death was damning, and would require counter-evidence of the most powerful kind to set it aside.

And where was such counter-evidence to come from? Before this supposition of guilt which was set up against Gabrielle could be got rid of, some other theory would, of necessity, have to be put forward. The quantity of opium found in the post-mortem examination, how was it to be accounted for? By some means or other that amount of poison had been conveyed into the system of the deceased lady. Some person or other had been instrumental in introducing that poison; now who was that person? Who had anything to gain by the lady's death? Who had had access to her? Who had had the opportunity of administering the deleterious drug? Was it her servant? So far from gaining by her mistress's death, the woman would be a great loser by it. Had Miss Carrington made a will, she would in all probability have left some considerable sum as a provision for one who had so long been dependent upon her. But there seemed every reason to suppose that there was no will, and in that case Jane Cantanker would not inherit a single farthing.

The only other theory that was deserving of a moment's consideration was that of self-destruction. Was this poison administered by the lady's own hand? There was not one tittle of evidence in support of this view of the case. There had been nothing in the bearing or conversation of the late Miss Carrington to indicate that she had ever had such a thing in contemplation. There was nothing in her circumstances, pecuniary or otherwise, to lead her to it. She had never been heard to express herself at any time as being weary of life, or having any sorrow pressing on her, the only remedy for which would be death.

No doubt, in the course of the inquiries which would now be set on foot, there would be every attempt made to ascertain whether Miss Carrington had had any quantity of the poison by which she had died, in her possession, or whether she had recently purchased some at any of the chemists' shops in the neighbourhood. If none could be found, nor any indication gained of such purchase having been made, the supposition of her having died by her own hand would be very much weakened, and the opposite theory, that the poison had been administered by some one else, would be proportionately strengthened.

And then would return the old question, who was that some one else? with the old difficulty of finding any satisfactory answer to it. That question came back from time to time in a sort of regular rotation to Gilbert's mind, and still he could make nothing of it. All through that night, while Gabrielle slept the sleep of pure exhaustion, he kept weary watch, and sought, as best he might, to reduce this chaos of monotonous thought which racked his brain, to some sort of order. It was a terrible night. Most of us have known something sufficiently like it to give us an idea, though a faint one, of what the poor fellow went through.

There is luckily a limit to our powers of endurance, and when the morning dawned, and showed him that sweet innocent face beside him, he said to himself, "It cannot be but that she will be taken care of, and brought through this and every other trouble, to happiness;" and with that thought, and a certain uplifting of his heart with which it is not for us to meddle, he fell into a quiet sleep.

Such seasons of refreshment come to us from time to time, even in the midst of our worst troubles, and give us force with which to endure their renewed attacks.

That night Jane Cantanker kept a double watch—a watch on the living and the dead. She sat, indeed, by the bedside of her dead mistress, but it was with the door of the room partly open; so that the slightest noise in the house,

such as might be made by any attempt to escape on the part of Gabrielle Penmore, must certainly have caught her attention instantly.

And ever and anon she would steal to the door, and, with outstretched neck and suspended breath, would listen till the very stillness seemed a sound, and the solitude a presence.

CHAPTER XXII. AN UNIMPRESSIVE CEREMONY.

The inquest was held in the large upper room of the Duke of Cumberland public-house, which was not many doors off from the house in Beaumont-street, with which we have had so much to do. The coroner was a gentleman of skill and experience. The jury included among its numbers, as usual, a few men of sense and discretion, and a good many exceedingly opinionated gentlemen, with thick skulls, and a great opinion of their own powers of discernment and observation.

Although the inquest itself was held at the adjacent public-house, it was, of course, necessary that the jury should visit the house in which the death had taken place, in order that they might go through the necessary preliminary of inspecting the body of the person whose death was to be the subject of inquiry. What a houseful it seemed as they came crowding into the passage, and trooping up the narrow staircase, and bulging against the banisters, that were so weak and yielding. They looked about them, too, as if they expected to see something bearing upon the case in every corner of the house.

In the room, *the* room, which they had come to visit, they were received by Jane Cantanker, and many were the furtive glances directed towards her by such members of the jury as had already heard rumours of the attachment of this woman to her late mistress, and of the suspicions of foul play which she was said to entertain. The woman's looks were terrible. The watch she had kept, the emotion she had undergone, had told upon her already. She was not weeping now, but her eyes were red and raw-looking, and fierce suspicion glared out of them, so that none of those present cared to encounter their glances. The jury had not much to say, nor any reason for remaining long where they were. This was not a case where there were wounds to inspect, or tracks of blood to follow, or implements of violence to examine. Looking on that face, on which the awful majesty of Death had settled, it seemed a sort of impertinence almost to doubt about the manner of this unfortunate lady's decease — the expression was so calm and so quiet.

The jurymen lingered about a little while, looked at the prints against the wall, and at the different objects on the chimney-piece, and then they began to descend the stairs in the same order as they had come up, but with something more of alacrity. They had got over that sight which we all flinch from a little. They had got out of the presence of Death, and, say what you will, it was a relief.

Before leaving, the coroner had ventured to make an inquiry:

"Had anything been found?" meaning any bottle or other vessel which might have contained the poison.

"Every part of the room had been searched diligently," was the answer, "but nothing of the kind had been discovered." The woman stood glaring like a tigress by the dead body of her mistress. "It was not likely that anything of the kind would be found among her mistress's things," she said.

The coroner felt that this was not the moment to ask any more questions. He would shortly be able to put them more authoritatively in his professional capacity. So he withdrew to the Duke of Cumberland, where the jury was already assembled, and whither he was shortly followed by Jane Cantanker, who was indeed one of the principal witnesses to be examined that day.

There are few ceremonials connected with our administration of justice which are less imposing, less picturesque, if the expression may be allowed, than that first judicial inquiry which it is the business of the coroner to institute in all cases of a suspicious nature, and which is called an inquest. It can be held anywhere, is held oftenest, perhaps, at a public-house, and seldom, indeed, in any building where anything of architectural pretension can give dignity to the scene. There are no court-ushers, no officials in costume, no judges in scarlet robes, or even barristers in wigs and gowns. The coroner and jury sit at a table which was probably the night before used by the members of some convivial meeting, and is indented with the scars which have been left by pewter pots beaten against the board by enthusiastic gentlemen in token of applause. It is, for the most part, a squalid scene. Squalid people, in the main, are examined at such tribunals, and the circumstances which are elicited are, for the most part, squalid also.

Gin, beer, stale tobacco, stunted forms, contracted foreheads, blackened eyes, greasy fustian clothing, servile grovelling, savage effrontery, drunkenness, violence, and crime in general, all these are important elements which go to make up, in the mass, the kind of life which it is most commonly the business of coroners to look into in the course of their inquiries, and very grateful we ought to be to those who undertake to face such unpalatable things in the performance of a public duty.

This present inquiry, however, was of a different sort; and it is rare for a coroner's jury to be brought together to inquire into circumstances with which people in the station of life occupied by our various characters are mixed up. "Quite genteel life, you know," the beadle had said, when arguing with a gentleman in the green-grocery line who didn't want to attend. "Connected with the governments of our West India Islands, and practising the bar as a profession.

It's a case, sir, as you'll hear of again, and be proud to say, in after years, that you was mixed up with it from the first."

The inquest which was organised for the purpose of making due inquiry into the circumstances attending the death of Diana Carrington, was not a more impressive ceremony than others of its class. The coroner sat at the end of the table, and was "faced" by the foremost juryman. The others were seated round the table in no particular order. There was that curious hardness about the manner of the coroner which is commonly observable in all persons who are much mixed up professionally with death and with scenes of horror and suffering. Brisk, energetic, little ready to be drawn aside into a consideration of collateral issues, destitute, apparently, of feeling, this man did his work well, and, in every practical point, tenderly and considerately. A smart man this, very particular as to his attire, and not ill-provided with chains and breloques. There was not a better watch in the parish than that which ticked against his healthy and spare abdomen.

"Well, gentlemen," began the coroner, after the inevitable sotto voce consultations with the beadle and one or two other officials had been gone through, and after the invariable messenger had been despatched in search of somebody or something, and had then been called back for supplementary promptings, and then despatched again—"well, gentlemen, we are met together to inquire into the circumstances attending the death of this lady, Diana Carrington, whose remains you have just seen, and who seems to have come by her death in rather a suspicious manner, the deceased having retired to rest in her usual state of health, and having been found next morning dead in her bed. It will be your business, gentlemen, to ascertain how the deceased lady came by her death, and to examine such witnesses as are most likely to be able to throw some light upon the subject. Are the witnesses all here, Robbins?"

"Yes, your worship."

"Who stands first on the list?"

"Jane Cantanker, your worship."

"Call Jane Cantanker," said the coroner.

Jane Cantanker was there already, with dry red glaring eyes, like a she-wolf deprived of her whelps. She was perfectly self-possessed and unembarrassed. Embarrassment belongs to those who are occupied with themselves. Cantanker was engrossed with other matters. Her mistress lay dead. How had she died?

The examination of this witness was about to commence, when it became understood that she had some preliminary observations to make.

"I wish to say something of importance before I am examined," said Cantanker.

"What have you to say?" asked the coroner.

"There is a person connected with this case," she said abruptly, "whom I suspect of foul play, and I wish to know whether any steps can be taken to ensure her being kept in custody while the inquiry goes on. I speak of Mrs. Penmore, the lady of the house in which my mistress died."

"The lady will be examined at the proper time," said the coroner, referring to a paper in his hand. "In the mean time, the jury cannot listen to any denunciations on your part. You must give your evidence as the other witnesses will, and it will be for the jury to decide to whom, if to any one, suspicion should attach."

The evidence then followed. This is not the proper place in which to give it. It is enough to say that what the witness had stated previously to Dr. Giles in his consulting-room, was again gone through, the witness dwelling, however, with additional insistance upon the unnatural eagerness, as she called it, which Mrs. Penmore had manifested in her request to be allowed to supply Cantanker's place in taking the supper-tray up-stairs with her own hands. She dwelt on this, and made much of it, as she did of the fact that, in going up-stairs with those refreshments, Mrs. Penmore had stepped aside into the room on the first floor, remaining there some little time. It was evidently the wish of the witness to imply that in that interval Mrs. Penmore had tampered with the meat and drink which she was carrying up-stairs, though of course this was not said in so many words, but only unmistakably hinted at. There was much sensation among the jurymen during the whole of this narrative, and they whispered together frequently during its delivery.

It was, perhaps, unfortunate for Gabrielle that her evidence came next, as that of the last witness had certainly not impressed the jury favourably towards her. She was dreadfully nervous too, and agitated. The circumstances in which she found herself were so new to her. That large tavern-room, with its smell of beer and stale tobacco; the rough, strange-looking people about the place; the policemen, a class with whom she had never thought it possible she could have any converse, unless it was to claim protection from them. All these things, together with the inquiring looks of the members of the jury, which were fixed upon her with a combination of curiosity and suspicion, served to fill her with such terror and confusion as rendered her evidence at first hardly intelligible. The coroner, though, as has been said, rather a hard man, was disposed to help her, and give her time, but even he looked gravely on her, and even his kindness had a cold tone about it, she thought. It seemed to her that this gentleman considered himself as examining a culprit rather than a witness. It may be that he felt this himself.

Poor thing! It seems likely that Gabrielle must have been conscious during her examination how much her own evidence was telling to her disadvantage. All the facts seemed so strongly to point against her. They all looked so different now to what they had done at the

time. The tale she had to tell was all so fatally against herself. Her conduct seemed incapable of explanation even in her own eyes, what would it appear in those of others?

"Can you remember any circumstances which took place on the evening of the day on which the deceased breathed her last?"

This was one of the coroner's first questions. Of course, he had not neglected to caution her very strongly that anything she said might be used to her disadvantage.

Gabrielle's answers throughout the inquiry were singularly unlike the evasive replies to which coroners are accustomed. Yet she was very frightened, and spoke in a low tone of voice:

"Yes: she dined with us as usual."

"Can you remember anything peculiar which took place?"

"Yes, I can remember everything. I am sorry to say that the conversation turned in an unfortunate direction, and some angry words were spoken on both sides."

"'On both sides?' By your husband and yourself, on the one side, and by the deceased lady, on the other?"

"There were no angry words spoken by my husband. Those that *were* spoken came from my lips, and from—from——" She hesitated to speak in apparent disparagement of the dead. "My husband tried to quiet me, but I was very angry."

"May I ask what had excited these unpleasant feelings?"

"I thought—perhaps I was mistaken—that she spoke with a wish to raise herself in my husband's esteem, at my expense, implying that he would have done well to have chosen her for his wife rather than me."

"And this led to high words, no doubt? Can you remember what you said?"

"I spoke hastily in the heat of the moment. I did not mean what I said."

"We have been told that you spoke of Miss Carrington as 'not fit to live.' Is that true?"

"I am afraid it is."

"I gather from the evidence of the previous witness that you were one of the last persons who saw the deceased lady on the evening which preceded her death. Did you observe anything unusual in her manner or appearance? Did she seem to be suffering at all in health?"

"She seemed to be very sleepy and heavy, and complained of being tired."

"Nothing more remarkable than that?"

"No. I remember nothing."

"I must now ask you," resumed the coroner, after a pause, "whether your going up-stairs on this occasion with the deceased lady's supper was not an unusual proceeding on your part? Had you ever, in fact, done so before?"

This question was answered in the negative, a circumstance which seemed to impress the jury not a little.

"And how came it that on this occasion you departed from your usual practice?"

"It was in consequence of what took place at dinner-time. I wanted to take the opportunity of having some explanation, and of expressing my regret for what had occurred."

"And this was your only motive for acting as you did."

"Indeed it was. What other could I have?"

What other indeed, poor soul? That was just the question. The jurymen looked at one another. There was a sort of artlessness about those words which for the moment quite disarmed suspicion. Even the coroner paused for a time in his examination.

He resumed it after a while, endeavouring to extract all the particulars of that last interview, but there was nothing more to be gathered from the evidence than what the reader knows already.

"And this interview which took place on the occasion of your taking up the refreshments to Miss Carrington was the last? You never saw her again?"

"I never saw her again alive? I heard the tidings of what had happened from the servant next morning, and hastened up-stairs, but it was all over then."

It was not difficult to see that this evidence of Mrs. Penmore's was by no means satisfactory to the jury. Questions were put by some of the jurymen, with the view of eliciting more information in connexion with various parts of the inquiry, but as Gabrielle had told all she had to tell, the questions were put in vain. In vain, also, did the coroner, versed in the examining of witnesses, seek in his turn to extract some additional facts. There were no additional facts to extract, and Gabrielle was at length released from this terrible ordeal.

Gilbert was close at hand waiting for her. He had not been admitted to the room during the examination of witnesses, because it had been thought possible that it might have been necessary for him to be included among them. His evidence, however, could only have been a corroboration of that last taken, so it was dispensed with, and that of the medical man was taken next.

It was very important, and, in this respect an exception to the general rule, very decisive. There was no hesitating opinions broached here as to what might, or might not, have been the cause of death. The traces of the poison were not difficult to find, nor was its nature doubtful. The cause of death was the administration of opium, and that in a considerable quantity. There was no doubt of it. The examination of the body after death had revealed no indications of mortal disease. There was slight congestion of the liver, and certain small deviations from a perfectly healthy condition of some of the other organs, but no such symptoms of organic disease as could in any way account for death. The question now left for the jury to decide, was not

the cause of death—that there was no doubt of. Laudanum, and that in a sufficient quantity to destroy life, had been found in the stomach of the deceased lady. The question that now remained was—by whom was it administered? How did it get there?

Now, in order to arrive at a solution of this question, it became necessary to ascertain, first, whether the deceased lady had had any opium in her own possession, or had recently purchased any; and next, whether any quantity, large or small, of this drug had lately been in the hands of any of those persons who had had access to her in her last hours. The first of these two hypotheses was that which it seemed desirable to examine first—already the room of the deceased had been searched, and her boxes and drawers ransacked for evidences of her having had laudanum in her own possession. The search had, however, hitherto been in vain. It was necessary by all means to prove—in so far as a negative could be proved—that the poison had not been administered by the deceased's own hand, before stirring the question of its having been given by some one else. To accuse any other person, or even to suspect any other person, of having so administered it, was to accuse or suspect that person of nothing less than wilful murder, and such an accusation, it was felt on all sides (except indeed by one person), must not be brought hastily, or till all other theories connected with the case were exhausted and finally disposed of.

Had Jane Cantanker been a man, and formed one of the jury, she would have been for losing no time in considering that first hypothesis, whether the deceased lady might have died by her own hand, but would have proceeded at once to charge Gabrielle Penmore with the crime of wilful murder, and to set the police to work to hunt for such additional evidence against her as would complete that which was already in existence, and leave her without a loophole to creep out of. But this woman's accusations were, as we have seen, not listened to, and Mrs. Penmore was to be left at liberty till the police had had time to make inquiry as to whether any of the different occupants of the house in Beaumont-street had made any recent purchase of laudanum.

As to the private opinions of those who had listened to the evidence, as to what the coroner and each member of the jury secretly believed, that is another question altogether. That everything seemed to point to Gabrielle Penmore as the person most likely to have administered the poison, they probably would all and each have admitted, but they gave her the benefit of the doubt, so long as doubt was still possible, feeling that there wanted but one additional link in the chain of evidence to connect Gabrielle with the crime. That additional link was to be supplied, alas, only too soon.

Meanwhile the inquest was adjourned, in order to give the police time to make the necessary investigations, and the medical evidence being quite complete, the order for the burial of the deceased was duly given.

WORKING THE RIO GRANDE RAILWAY.*

It need hardly be said that I wished at once to reject the terms proposed by Grass for the connexion of our Rio Grande Company with his Financial Company. The whole amount of promotion money which I was to receive from the undertaking was to be ten thousand pounds, and I did not quite like the idea of giving five thousand pounds of this as a fee to the Universal Financial, besides one thousand pounds as a present to the general manager, in addition to what I should have to pay for qualifying Mr. Watson and Mr. Grass. The last gentleman, however, settled the matter thus:

"Take my advice," he said; "accept the offer of the Universal, call a meeting of the directors, and tell them you have done so, and at the same meeting I will propose and carry that, in consequence of your great exertions, and the success that has hitherto attended your endeavours to bring out the Rio Grande and Mexico Railway Company, your promotion money be increased from ten to twenty thousand pounds. This will give you a matter of upwards of twelve thousand pounds clear money to divide between you and your friend Mr. Wilson. Only remember, that I require you to give me an undertaking now, that if I succeed in obtaining this increase of your promotion money, you will, so soon as it is paid to you, make over to me (beyond, and in addition to my shares, or any other payment or moneys I may receive from you) the sum of two thousand pounds sterling."

Before giving an answer to this very cool proposition, I asked for four-and-twenty hours to consider the matter, and the next morning found me early at Lord Dunstraw's, to consult him.

"Talk of the welchers that hang on to the outer circles of the betting rings," he said, "there is not one amongst them that can hold a candle to these regular joint-stock promoting men."

Acting under his lordship's advice, and anxious to bring the preliminary affairs of the company to an end, I gave Mr. Grass the required "undertaking."

The day after I had given it to him, there was a preliminary meeting of the directors at my chambers. Here it was proposed by Mr. Grass, seconded by Mr. End, and carried unanimously, that our solicitors, Messrs. Quirck, Quibble, and Quirck, be forthwith instructed to alter the articles of association, so that my promotion money be increased from ten to twenty thousand pounds. At the same time, I informed the board that our success might now be looked

* See the last number.

upon as certain; for the Universal Finance Association had not only agreed to bring out the company under their own auspices, but had also given a written guarantee that they would be responsible for all the printing and other preliminary expenses, in case we had not enough shares applied for to allow of our proceeding to an allotment. Moreover, the said Universal Finance guaranteed that the company should come out, and at not less than two premium and that it should rise to four premium, and be maintained at not less than three premium, until after the letters of allotment were issued.

Accordingly, a few days after the meeting at which my promotion money had been increased, there appeared in all the papers a long prospectus, of which I gave the commencement in the last number, but which commenced with the announcement that "The Universal Financial Association (Limited)" invites subscriptions to the "Rio Grande and Mexico Railway Company (Limited)," *to be incorporated under the Companies Act of* 1862. John Clinch was advertised as general manager: salary eight hundred a year to commence with, and to be increased two hundred pounds every year, until it reached two thousand pounds per annum. Wilson's name was also in the articles of association as secretary: salary five hundred a year, increasing at the rate of one hundred a year, until it should reach a thousand; but, then, there was a private understanding between us—and, following the example of our craft, we passed "undertakings" to that effect—that all money received as salary by the pair of us was to go into a common fund, and be divided equally.

When the company came out, there was a perfect rush for the shares. In the first three days our bankers received deposits upon applications for no less than three hundred thousand; although there were only one hundred thousand in the whole company, and of these it was intended only to issue one-half, or fifty thousand shares. On the Monday after we came out, a notice was inserted in all the papers that the share-list would be closed on the Thursday, and this made the rush for shares all the greater. There was not a member of the board but received numerous applications from his friends to put their names down, and use their interest to obtain shares for them. The Universal Financial Association did its work well. In six hours after the prospectus had been published, it was quoted at one and a half to two premium, and the next day was at two and a half to three and a half. These fictitious prices are in no way whatever the work of the Stock Exchange. The members of "the house" almost invariably set their face against "rigging the market;" but they are powerless in the hands of men who, with money at command, are determined to run up the value of any named scrip. The operation is carried on by outsiders, who go to a stockbroker, and tell him to sell, say, a hundred Rio Grande shares, but at not less than one premium. At the same time a confederate goes to another broker, and tells him he must buy fifty or a hundred of the same scrip, as he has promised to deliver them, and will go as high as one and a half, or even two, premium.

Of course the brokers set to work. The one, anxious to do his best for his client, gets the highest possible price for the shares, the premium on which will be paid back to the other party on settling day. When this operation is repeated perhaps a hundred times in the day, and parties determined to run up certain shares are ever sending brokers into the market to buy this scrip for them at any price, the quotations must go up—it is impossible to be otherwise. In our case neither money nor energy was wanting to push our shares up in the market, and so well did the Universal Financial perform this part of their duty, that the success exceeded all their anticipations. The premium increased to ten, twelve, fifteen, and eighteen premium.

It is only those who were present on the occasion that could form any idea of what took place in our temporary board-room when the directors proceeded to allot the shares of the company to the different applicants. I have mentioned that not more than fifty thousand shares were available for distribution, and for these there were at least five times the number of applications.

"I see, gentlemen," said Mr. Grass, with a strong Teutonic accent, "that if we have to look over all these names one by one, we shall never get to an end of our work. Besides, are we not fools to part with what is, no doubt, one of the best things that has come out in England for the last year? Would any one of us give a cheque to the first man that asked us in the street? Why, then, give these shares away? Why allow others to profit by what is now our own? I therefore propose, that of the fifty thousand shares, forty-five thousand be distributed amongst us here equally, allowing our noble chairman to have a larger share than the rest, and that five thousand only be allotted to the general public. The shares are to-day at eighteen premium. Whenever it is known that only five thousand are in the market, they will rise to twenty-five, thirty, nay forty premium."

"My lord and gentlemen," said Mr. Watson, greatly to my astonishment, "I beg to second the motion which Mr. Grass has just made."

In the course of a rather adventurous life, I had heard of and met with a considerable deal of villany in the world, but the coolness of this proposition, I confess, staggered me. The chairman seemed for a moment quite taken aback, but, before any one had time to speak, he recovered himself and said:

"Gentlemen,—I am not much of a man of business, and this is the first company of which I have ever held shares, far less been a director or chairman. I agreed to join the board for the purpose of helping an old college friend, Mr. Clinch, the promoter of the undertaking. But, with all due deference to Mr. Grass and Mr. Watson—I don't wish to offend them—but if

their motion is carried, I must at once resign my seat at the board, and shall publish in to-morrow's Times and Daily News the reason why I have left the company."

These few words were spoken in that quiet, unpretending, non-blustering style, which says little, but means much. Mr. Grass had too much good sense to make a quarrel with the best man at our board. He was well aware that if the chairman of this company had resigned, the whole affair would suffer most seriously, and the shares go down to par, or even discount.

For a few minutes I thought that my last hope of making anything out of the company was gone; but up rose Mr. Wood. He began by praising the "noble lord who so ably presided over our meeting;" and then he mentioned in the highest terms the "two honourable members of the House of Commons, who had recently spoken." After a speech of twenty-five minutes, he proposed that "although the number of shares which Mr. Grass proposed to be allotted each member of the board was too great, there could be no harm in such directors as wished having each three hundred shares allotted to them." He said that, "putting the premium on such shares as only ten pounds, there would be a clear profit of three thousand pounds for each of them, and that, considering all things, they should 'rest and be thankful' with that amount."

Eventually the struggle between honesty and the lust of gain was compounded thus:—the greedy party should have their three hundred shares, or nothing. Lord Dunstraw at once declared that if a motion in favour of each director getting three hundred shares was carried, he would not oppose it, although he for one would not accept of more than twenty-five, for which he had at first put his name down, and fifty extra shares which he had applied for apart from those he had taken to qualify himself.

Mr. Grass looked like a hungry tiger deprived of its prey. For a short time he tried what blustering would do; and with vulgar insolence declared that he, too, could ruin the undertaking if he liked, and if he left the direction the concern would certainly not prosper. But he was met by Mr. Currie, who very quietly reminded him that it was not the fact of this or that director resigning his seat at the board that would injure the company, but the reasons which could be brought forward as to the cause of their leaving. Still, Mr. Grass would be heard; but I happened to sit next him at the board, and whispered that he had better, to use an American phrase, "let things slide." Moreover, I reminded him that any damage he now did the company would be as much an injury to the Universal Financial Association as to us, for that office, having undertaken to bring us out, if the business turned out a failure, the Universal would suffer to as great an extent as we should. Mr. Grass merely asked me to go aside with him into the outer room, and when once we were there he made me the following proposition, speaking in a voice shaking with passion, and in a language which was quite as much German as English.

"Look here," he said, "that chairman of ours is a fool, he is not a man of business, and would ruin anything. Now, I have a proposition to make. Let Lord Dunstraw, Mr. Currie, General Foster, and the rest of that party, resign their seats. I will be your chairman, and I will bring in half a dozen City men of the right sort. We will then allot to each director his three thousand shares, and each of us will make a fortune, yourself included."

The coolness of this proposition certainly startled me. However, I saw at once it was of no use whatever to argue with him, and so, very curtly, declined entertaining his proposition. Upon this, nothing abashed, he said, "You are a friend of the chairman's?" I replied that I was. "Well," he asked, "you want me to side with his lordship, and to vote as he votes?" I said that of course Mr. Grass was at liberty to vote as he pleased; but that I thought Lord Dunstraw would always be found on the side of honour and fair dealing. "Now then," he said, "give me an answer—yes or no—in five minutes, to the following proposition. If you agree, in writing, to give me a third of all the promotion money you get for this company, directly or indirectly—that is, I must share equally with Mr. Wilson and yourself in all your profits—on this condition, and only on this, I will undertake to vote at every board meeting as you or the chairman wishes me to do, for one year from this date."

The audacity of Mr. Grass's first proposition astonished me, his second amazed me. He had been thwarted in his expected feast, and this made him all the more ravenous. I therefore said to him: "Mr. Grass, if you give me an undertaking that you will vote as the chairman votes at every meeting of the board for the next twelve months, I will give you, not a third, but a fourth of all the promotion money we receive. I don't want your promise in writing, merely your word, given in the presence of my friend Mr. Wilson. But, to set your mind at ease, I will give you my undertaking in writing, without ascribing any reason for doing so, that I will pay you one-fourth of all I receive for bringing out this company."

To this he agreed; his promise was given to me in the presence of Mr. Wilson, and we returned to the board-room, where the business of allotting the shares was now going on. There were certain parties to whom we were almost obliged to allot shares—brokers, stock-jobbers, bankers, merchants, and such-like. As it was, not more than a tenth of the number of the shares applied for was given to any save a favoured few. This, of course, created a great deal of discontent; but still it showed those who got any shares that there had been an immense demand for them, and thus served to run up the price. In the list of applications sent in by the Universal Financial Asso-

ciation, of persons for whose intention to hold and not part with their shares that company would be answerable, there were the names of Albert Grass, Frederick Grass, Caroline Grass, Mary Grass, Ann Grass, Jane Grass, Israel Grass, Isaac Grass, and Jacob Grass. All these, I found out, were the children of our worthy director, the eldest being a boy of fifteen, and the youngest a baby in arms. Amongst these nine young speculators a thousand shares were asked for, and, coming through the Universal Financial, they were allotted in full. This made a profit of about ten thousand pounds for our Anglo-German, to say nothing of what he must make by the share he had had in the different other advantages he had derived from the company. At last, after a vast deal of trouble, and with Wilson and myself sitting up two whole nights at the work, the "letters of allotment and regret" were posted, to the number of not less than ten thousand.

The promotion money to which I was entitled was twenty thousand pounds, and this I could take either in shares at par or in money. Seeing, however, to what a premium our scrip had advanced, I, of course, elected to have the shares allotted to me. Accordingly, each share being calculated at ten pounds paid up, two thousand were entered in my name. These I at once sold at a premium of fifteen pounds, so that in addition to the twenty thousand pounds, the value of the shares at par, I realised twenty-five thousand pounds premium, making altogether forty-five thousand pounds, which had to be divided between Mr. Wilson and myself, but of which, according to our agreement, the ever-present Mr. Grass claimed a fourth, he being now, in point of fact, a third promoter of the company. This, however, I disputed.

So soon as the shares were allotted, the struggle to get them up to a higher premium than ever began. The Universal Financial Association, being large shareholders, and having also numerous friends who held shares, was greatly interested in running them up. The only way to accomplish this was by not seeking or offering to sell them, and, as the great majority of our shareholders were wealthy, the plan was easy enough to carry out. In the mean time, their value had somewhat fallen, owing to a report — got up on purpose — that the committee of the Stock Exchange had determined on refusing us a settling day. So insidiously was this story circulated, and so visible day by day was the decline in the quotation of our shares, that I congratulated myself upon having sold mine while they stood at fifteen premium. From fifteen premium to thirteen, ten, eight, and by degrees as low as one and a half to two premium, they declined, until one day they reached par, and were even quoted as low as one-eighth discount. Even I was completely bewildered in my conjectures as to the reason of this. At last, one day, by mere chance, I found myself in a railway carriage on the Brighton line, with a gentleman whom I had formerly known very well indeed, but of whom I had for some years lost sight. As he took his seat, and shook hands with me, it flashed suddenly across me that he was a member of the Stock Exchange Committee, and might, perhaps, give me some insight into the why and the wherefore of our settlement being refused. I did not rush at the subject, but brought it about so gradually that we were well over more than half our journey before I put the question to him. Upon my asking whether it was true that we had been refused a settlement, he at once replied: "Refused! No; how could we refuse you a settlement? In the first place, it is barely a week since your application was sent in, and I am not breaking confidence in telling you, who, being one of the officials of the company, must be aware, that your papers are all correct, as far as we can see, and to-morrow or next day, as soon as he has time, the secretary will inform you officially that you have been granted a settlement, and that you are to be quoted on the daily official list."

This reply staggered me; and the more so because all our directors who were known to buy and sell scrip, had for the last three weeks been more desponding than any one else respecting our prospects of a settlement. I did not question my friend any more, but, upon reaching Brighton, at once sent a telegram to Wilson, telling him to purchase for the next settlement as many shares of the Rio Grande as he could lay hands on, even if he paid four, five, six, eight or ten premium for them. I did not see by whom the trick had been played, but I felt quite confident that there was fraud somewhere. In two days' time the truth got out that we were to be granted a settlement. There were then many persons who wanted to buy, and no one who would sell shares. It turned out after a little time that nearly all our shares had been bought up when they were at such low quotations, by Mr. Grass, Mr. Watson, Mr. Wood, and their friends, who had combined in a body first to run down, then to buy, afterwards to cry up, and to end by selling at a handsome profit all our shares that they could lay hands on. The whole affair was left in the hands of Mr. Grass, who bought and sold the shares with the greatest nicety, never leaving even the smallest margin by which he could be, to use his own elegant expression, "put in the pot." Of the general public, to whom a certain portion of our shares had been allotted in the first place, very few indeed had not parted with their scrip.

But the devil is ever true to his own. It was found that nearly all the shares were in the one set of hands. A number of persons had sold scrip for the settlement, and now they could not find any to buy what they had sold. The prices went up faster than they had gone down. Still no sellers. Only here and there small parcels of scrip was to be had. When the truth of the story got out, the outside share-jobbing public was furious. It was not so much that they objected to what had been done, as to having been done themselves, and those who

had neither won nor lost by the transaction were angry that they had missed so rare an opportunity of making money. "It was no longer ago than last Friday week," said an old and wealthy stock-jobber to me, with tears in his eyes, "that I was offered a hundred and fifty of those infernal Rio Grande shares at one-eighth premium, and to-day they are at eighteen to twenty; I should have made close on three thousand pounds at a stroke."

In the mean time, as settling-day drew nearer, the value of the shares increased, and still there were few if any in the market. It was a very clear case of "rigging," and yet there was nothing which could be positively laid hold of either in "the house," or outside. When the shares reached twenty-two to twenty-five premium, a few thousands were let loose to be purchased, but as the premium sank, the supply stopped. It was evident that there was but one master-hand guiding the whole transaction. By slow degrees, the whole great number of which he had the management were sold, but none at a lower price than eighteen to twenty premium, and a great many were bought at as high a figure as twenty-five premium.

In the mean time, whilst all this was going on outside, our board continued to meet weekly for the ordinary routine of business. I am quite certain that many of our directors had not the most remote idea of the very profitable game which their colleagues were playing outside. When the reports respecting the rigging of the market became publicly spoken of in the City, and even hinted at by angry shareholders who corresponded with the papers, Lord Dunstraw, General Foster, and Mr. Currie were quite indignant, and wished that our secretary should write an official letter to the papers, denying that any of our directors had bought or sold shares in any considerable numbers, and stating that upon an inspection of our books, it would be seen that no member of our board held any shares beyond the number which as directors they were obliged to hold. But in that they were overruled, and were persuaded that all these malignant tales could be traced to persons who were disappointed at not getting as large an allowance of our shares as they had hoped and expected.

By degrees the cry got louder in the City, and the accusations more defined. Our directors were openly accused of having rigged the market for their own individual profit. The chairman wrote an indignant denial to the papers, and the secretary was instructed to do so in the name of the board. Still the believers in our innocence were few. Lord Dunstraw challenged inquiry, and was met by such a host of evidence respecting the dishonesty of certainly three of his colleagues, that he resigned his seat, and left the company in disgust; Mr. Currie followed his example; and General Foster went after Mr. Currie. Mr. Grass was then elected chairman, and he introduced two or three men of his own stamp as directors. He could afford to stick by it, for he had made certainly not less in one way and another than sixty or seventy thousand pounds by his connexion with the concern. Yet, spite of all he could do, the shares fell. Not that that hurt him at all, for he had already sold all he had, except the five-and-twenty which, as a director, he was obliged to retain.

I shortly found that to maintain my position and my self-respect under the new board was impossible; so, without waiting for the day when I should have been obliged to knock down our present chairman as he sat at the head of the board-room table, I resigned my situation. Wilson did the same.

In a short time, the whole affair went irretrievably to the bad, and I see that a petition has been presented in Mr. Vice-Chancellor Wood's Court for winding it up.

WELSH HOLIDAYS.

I. THE INN AT THE FERRY.

The hill-side of the great Welsh island, and the hill-side of the mainland, sloping down steeply to the water's edge, make between them a kind of dell or valley, richly furnished with wooding; only at the bottom run the straits, a quarter of a mile wide, and glistening tranquilly like silver; up which we see tiny shipping, and a stray steamer or two, struggling slowly. Lower down, but high in the air, leaps across, the airy Menai-bridge, as light and fanciful and fairy-like as if some giant had thrown across his lady's lace shawl. It harmonises properly with the wooded hill, the leafy foliage, the small swelling and rolling meadows, and is itself one of the most satisfactory embodiments of the hackneyed song about "a thing of beauty!" For it "grows" upon us more and more, and we are never tired of gazing at its soft harmonious perfections. In an equal degree are we daily shocked and repelled by its ugly sister, the famous "tube," who lumbers clumsily across the straits lower down, a monument of architectural ironmongery.

By this spot, once ran the posting highway from Ireland to England. From here we can see across to the spot down to which the "mail" and the travelling-chaise and four, came posting down to the water's edge, and where the great raft took all on board and ferried them over. Sometimes it was rough and stormy, and there remains the tale of the great shipwreck of raft, posting-carriage, and nearly two hundred passengers, all capsized, carried down by the torrent, and utterly lost. Under happier auspices, the weary passenger who had been "knocking about" between Holyhead and Dublin, in one of the "packets" which started from Howth or Ringsend, had come across the island cramped in a coach or carriage, and had now accomplished his second voyage on the raft, like the survivors in Géricault's Wreck of the Medusa, weary and almost exhausted, at the threshold of his journey.

Toiling up from the shore-side at the bottom of the valley, it was surely a kindly and artful Boniface that thought of placing an inn here.

Stepping from the raft to the little pier, glancing up at the leafy Welsh hills, rising and yet rising, watching the six horses being yoked to the post-carriage to draw it up the steep road, and for several miles toil over the barriers of the hills, until the smooth and musical high road was reached, surely the traveller's eye would settle with delight on the little GEORGE INN, nestling among the trees, only a little way above him, overgrown with ivy, with over-hanging roof, low diamond-paned bow-windows, sanded floors, red curtains, and not so much as the twig of "a bush," its wines being in excellent condition. A moment's hesitation, and, unless it were Irish anchorites bound for town, or intending Trappists with stones in their slippers, no one but must have ordered away the six horses, and put up for the night at the snug GEORGE.

It is said THE GEORGE has stood where it stands, for three hundred years. In course of time many grudged the ferry passengers this welcome, and have come down the heights to the retired nook that overlooks the ferry. To meet this call, stucco, and the pride of coffee-rooms, and "salles à manger," have risen up, but the old tenement still crouches modestly at the skirt of the new building, and there are those who prefer one of the old rooms in the quiet older portion, though the walls are a little swelled and awry, and the outline of the roof is marked enough. This preservation is said to be owing to its last hostess, who kept up the now fading tradition that the host, not the house, was to be the leading element in the guest's mind, and that guests were to be dealt with, not as numerals, but as friends, or at least acquaintances, to be made welcome. Many came down to THE GEORGE attracted by its mistress (now no more) as much as by its accommodation.

Already there is talk of THE HOTEL COMPANY (LIMITED, of course), who will presently come in with their glib architect, "middle-aged" Jenkinson (so called from his attachment to mediæval treatment), and gut and sack the place. Middle-aged Jenkinson will of course contemptuously dismiss the *old* Ferry-house as "that shed." And before another year we shall have battlements, and balustrades, and an enormous swelling roof, pierced all over as if for artillery, like a ship turned upside down, ladies' coffee-room, and "gentlemen's ditto," with numbers, and bells that ring by machinery, and electric telegraphs, and, above all, "the lift." Defunct and buried hostess! This would have broken her heart.

II. OUR LITTLE TOWN.

HIGHER up is another ferry, ingeniously constructed, with a long wooden strip of planking, not three feet wide, running out nearly a quarter of a mile into the sea. On bluff days, we have to walk out to the very end of this wooden causeway, with the waves almost tumbling across the feet, and the wind blowing very stiffly, and the boards quite slippery with sea-weed. Poor stranger ladies often stop short in the middle of the passage, tottering before the strong gale, unable to go forward or backward, a spectacle of helpless terror. Sometimes, what with the shipping of seas, and the blowing, and the flying away of ladies' hats and veils, and the wet, it becomes altogether an adventure. But the native Welsh ladies come tripping down the plank, far out in the water, with perfect security, and gather up their skirts, and show their red petticoats, as if taking great pride in the favourable opportunity. Seen from the heights, they seem to be walking on the surface of the waters.

Our town has been pitched in a bowl of hills, and on the cold wintery autumn evening, seems to burrow and nestle itself with snugness and satisfaction under the shelter of the great hills—which good offices, however, it has repaid, after the usual fashion of the world, by encroaching on its benefactors. It has been steadily creeping up the skirts and sides, steadily spreading, stealthily encroaching in zig-zag lines, like flounces or trimmings, yet not such trimmings as an architectural modiste would approve of; for it rambles about from this side to that, now up and down, now across and diagonally, in a fashion that would give Elise a nightmare. It is a queer little snake of a town; for it is literally but one street, that curls, and struggles, and winds, crossed at intervals by little lanes, like vertebræ, and it seems to be, not all shops and private houses, like other little towns, but all churches and inns, beginning with the CATHEDRAL for a chief church, and the Red Lion as the chief inn. For this is a bishopric, with a chapter and canons, and we may see a real right reverend father in God walking about with lower limbs that look invitingly cool in summer, and as painfully chilly in winter, and with a magnificent "shovel" upon his head. Sometimes we meet a heavily-built open carriage, grinding down the hills with the drag on, and are mysteriously informed that it holds the bishop's lady. Another "shovel" is said to belong to the dean. Both deanery and episcopal palaces are pleasant residences down in the valley, among old trees not yet cut down to satisfy the villa-building mania.

But the "Establishment" is only coldly received here. A very Babel of religions obtains; and the "'Senters," as a Welshman, with perfect gravity, describes them to me, run riot. Here are Congregationalists, Wesleyans, Independents, Connexionalists, Shakers, Methodists, housed in all the decent but barbarous shapes of "'Senting" architecture. As every street and path seems to run through a little valley, the difficulty is to get fair level standing-room for these temples. You construct a sort of earthen shelf or bracket, and perch your church or chapel upon it. And if there are chapels, so are there whole herds of ministers, excellent men, no doubt, in their calling, but whose claims to sanctity happily do not rest on their faces and expressions. Over the chimney-piece of my room hangs a large-framed lithograph, containing twenty-one portraits of these gentlemen, and which seems to have been intended as a sort of affectionate

memorial of a meeting known as "Cenadon Hedd." The study of these likenesses is one of growing interest for me every morning, for a more dreadful selection of human types cannot be conceived. Whether "Cenadon Hedd" be a meeting, or an association, or an anthropological museum, or a gallery of "cuts" from the faces of malefactors of various shades of guilt, I can only admire the abnegation of those good men who, by this exhibition, were careless of exposing themselves to such misconstruction.

There are magnates in the district, with houses and castles of average merit, but which, in the dearth of excitement, become objects of extraordinary interest to visitors. The magnates are regarded by the population with a reverence and servility that is almost abject. Even the housekeeper of the arch magnate, who reigns in a small way when her principals are up in town for the season, enjoys a share of this awful respect. The arch magnate, the well-known Colonel Slater, has built himself a sham baronial castle (architect, "middle-aged" Jenkinson, whose skill in mediæval theatricals is well known), with solid towers and gloomy archways, and slits of windows, and which is as depressing and dark internally as the heartiest mediævalist would desire. We tourists can be admitted on certain days, when "the castle is shown," on payment of "three and sixpence," to Colonel Slater's housekeeper. On these occasions, the tourists are marshalled in flocks, and awed into a silent appreciation of the favour conferred on them, by the Prim and Grim housekeeper, who keeps her hands folded on her waist like a lady abbess, and utters a "please" to every sentence, like the snap of a courier-bag. The Prim and Grim leads the timid and cowering flock, marching in front like a bell-wether. "The principal s'loon, on right; grandfather of the present Colonel Slater; over the fireplace, Lady Whilemina Slater, by Renn'ls."

Herds of tourists stare these famous worthies out of countenance. Stray tourists from the manufacturing towns take up a butterfly pen-wiper with much interest, trying to discover the action, but are promptly called to order by the Prim and Grim, who reproves them sternly, "Please not to touch the family things." Then the herd is driven on down dark galleries, like cellars, stumbling and brushing against the walls, and being told that they are in "the western corridor," until they drift, one by one, with mouths open, and eyes on the ceiling, into the "grand dining-room," where there is the large sensational picture over the fireplace: "Mr. Jackson Slater, M.P., brother of the present Colonel Slater, cutting the first" (some tourists from the manufacturing towns think she is going to add, "first tooth," and have a "well a deary me!" quite ready)—"the first sod of the Pulla Wiska Railway." A splendid historical scene, crowded with figures. Here curiosity is greatly stimulated by something like cold meat and a cruet-stand on a sideboard, and the tourists would like much to go over and "feel" the cruets, but the eye of the Prim and Grim is on them, and they are driven on to what they take for the vaults, but which turns out to be the chapel. Here the tourist eagerness to touch, can no longer be restrained, and many fling themselves on various volumes, until the Prim and Grim, immeasurably shocked and disgusted, calls out, "Please not to touch the family prayer-books."

Our natives are a very primitive and simple race. Their only failing is ale and sweetmeats. There seems to be but one policeman: a stout person, who goes about, in a paternal way, with a walking-stick and a brass plate on his belt, as if he were a house door. He does a great deal of work with this walking-stick, leaning on it abstractedly; but he mostly seems to be going on business errands, which perhaps he is. No doubt he sighs for real business, and is driven to madness as he reads in his newspaper of the captures of burglars, shoplifters, and murderers, which other more favoured towns enjoy. Sometimes he comes on a herd of little boys, who have the same curious vendetta here with the guardian of the peace as they have at other places, whom he invariably routs with the curious cabalistic word "Poola! Poola!" or with something that sounds like it. Wicked stone-throwers, makers of mud-pies, marble-players, and other abandoned children, quail before this mysterious symbol, "Poola, Poola!" and fly in disorder. A strange language, almost hopeless to think of mastering. As a specimen, a place called Trynan is to be sold, and Jones or Griffith, as auctioneer, invites attention to the following lots, quite appalling in their syllables and pronunciation:

Lot 1. Cae-tros-y-lon Pella.
Lot 2. The House and Land of Bewdy Newydd.
Ditto. Caer-olu Nesa, lae-coed Llann-yr-oden, and part of Ddolhir.
Lot 5. Drylly-Clawdd.
Lot 7. Dafarndywyrch.

These dreadful words would damp the enthusiasm of the most ardent philologist. So, having had some faint idea of "picking up a little Welsh," with as little trouble as one might pick up a fern or a pebble, I see the folly of such a hope, and dismiss it for ever.

The natives, it is to be noticed, always speak with a foreign accent, which, in the women's mouths, is pretty. Of the mouths themselves, so much cannot be said, nor of Welsh eyes or noses. Why do they always persistently answer your questions with a "No, sir, sure," and a "Yes, sir, sure"? Yet they can be witty too, as when I hear the "gigman," driving over the suspension-bridge, angrily bid the herdsman take his cows out of the way: "After all, they ain't so easy to drive as a 'orse, sir," was his good-humoured expostulation. The donkeys here seem to have luxurious lives—as many are to be met with well groomed and even frisky, trotting along, carrying milk-cans deftly fitted to their bodies. One of them, I observe, knows the houses on his beat perfectly, and, with unusual sagacity, pulls up at his own proper gates and doors. Our bread comes to us in something like a perambulator, under charge of a baker about ten years old.

III. OUR PASTIMES.

For shows, rarce and otherwise, we are tolerably well favoured. That yellow ring on the lonely field shows where, only a week ago, "Spolieni, pupil to the celebrated Franconi," had pitched what he called the "Monster Camps Elysées Circus" in the gigantic pavilion. This was, alas, before *my* coming, or I might have seen Mr. Arthur Bridges, the "star" rider, and the "four great clowns," who were to "enliven the arena" with "their inimitable Shakespearean quips" and "chaste" humour. The bills are still pasted on the walls, so I can read of what I have lost. One of the "great" clowns is "little" Dubosq, the "laughing-moving French mime," between whom and his English "great" brother I know—as well as I know my catechism—that there rages a furious international jealousy. Most of all, I regret the elegant performance of Miss Ada Jacobs in Mazeppa, or the Wild Horse of the Desert, and admire the surprising good fortune of Spolieni in securing a lady with a name so nearly resembling that of the beautiful Ada Isaacs Menken. I should like, too, to have seen the whole party enter the town "at twelve, with the band sitting in the gorgeous gilded Car of Peace," and with Spolieni himself sitting aloft, and driving no less than six of his "unparalleled steeds." They were gone — there was no use repining—and they would not be here again for at least two "circuits" more.

So with the magician and ventriloquist, Mr. W. C. Darby, who, as we all must know, was "world famed," and had, of course, had the honour of performing before Her Most Gracious Majesty at Balmoral, and before His Royal Highness the Duke of Cambridge. That Scottish fastness seems to be preyed upon by magicians. I was fortunate enough to be in time for Mr. W. C. Darby. Stalls were three shillings; second seats two; amphitheatre one; and gallery sixpence. Carriages, Mr. Darby said cautiously, *might* be ordered at ten. A little van stood in the yard, which had brought the tin cups, the bowls, the balls, and that delicate woman with the baby, who took the money for the stalls, amphitheatre, first seats, and everything; not alone took the money, but was ticket-taker also, and place shower. By eight, I was the only occupant of the stalls; by the same hour there was no one in the "first seats;" there were two or three persons in the amphitheatre, and there were about a dozen boys in the gallery. The sickly woman came in several times looking wistfully at the barren benches, the magician's head was thrust out now and again, to satisfy himself; but it was a quarter-past eight, and those who had paid, with an arrogance arising from the knowledge of the value of their patronage, began to clamour noisily. Never did magician put a better face on so discouraging a prospect. He said he preferred ("it would be more convenient" was his expression) having all his audience near him, and in an instant had gathered together all his company in an indiscriminate mass close to him: a proceeding, I must say, a little unfair towards the solitary tenant of the stalls, who had rallied round him so handsomely. Not that he showed himself, in other respects, ungrateful for this mark of sympathy; for I remarked that, through the night, he always selected him as the person to hold the cup, or ball, or fish, or to draw a card, or even to lend him half-a-crown. Poor W. C. Darby! He went through it with wonderful spirit, and did not abridge us of a single trick, even of that plum-pudding made in a hat, whose ingredients *must* have swept away at least all the stall money; and only pleaded, with great humility, to be let off the grand distribution of toys, which was to come out of the hat after the pudding had been given away in small pieces to the audience. "For," said he, "our audience to-night is *not so large* as I anticipated." The first morsel of the pudding was handed to the stalls, and he really seemed to accept it as a genuine tribute to his powers of necromancy, when I said heartily, and in a loud voice, "that it was one of the best I had ever tasted;" a declaration received, too, with cheers by the expectant boys, to whom it was thrown to be devoured. Poor Darby! Carriages, of course, might have been ordered at ten, but they never came at ten, or at any other hour; and the first thing I saw the next morning was the magician driving away in his little one-horse or one-pony van, with his sickly wife sitting beside him. He recognised his single "stall" at once, and with some cheerfulness raised his hat as he passed.

Nor let me forget the grand national cantata —"The Siege of Beaumaris," or some such place—written by Ap Griffith, who is kindly allowed to teach the rudiments of music to the great Colonel Slater's *younger* children, and who is to be assisted by "the Amateur Union;" but how much more by the "kind patronage" of the great Slater himself. Very likely he will not go, having my Lord Bishop, with Lord Penmenmawr, to dinner, but will send the housekeeper and the children, and, better still, a cheque. For all of which blessings Ap Griffith will be very grateful, and ready, if required, to lay the Slater's heel upon his head.

In this way Welsh holidays glide by. What with walks, and drives in the little carriages, and boating—and there has been many a pleasant expedition to Beaumaris from The George, with cheerful company aboard—the time is filled up very pleasantly.

AT LA GUAIRA.

Anchoring in a harbour usually implies rest. It is not so at La Guaira. In fact, La Guaira is no port, but an open roadstead, where, though it seldom blows very heavily, there is ever a high swell, so high that landing is always difficult, and often dangerous. With the wind at north, the shore is directly to leeward, and a general smash among the shipping is then inevitable. Luckily, such winds are most rare; but some time before the arrival of the Yñez there was one, and every vessel at La Guaira stranded. Even with other

winds the danger is sometimes great, and then a cannon is fired from the fort as a signal that the rollers are setting in. Forthwith, all anchors are weighed, and the ships run out to sea till the swell moderates. Indeed, it is one of the inscrutable things that no one can understand, why La Guaira should be made the port for Carácas at all, when a mile or two to the west, on the other side of the next promontory, Cabo Blanco, there is the snug harbour of Catia, whence an easier road to Carácas might be made than that from La Guaira. But no; in spite of the swell which has caused the loss of so many vessels, which makes communication with the shore so troublesome, and which stirs up the sand in a fashion that renders it necessary to weigh anchors every eight days, lest the ships should become sand-locked; in spite of the ravages of the barnacles, the teredo navalis, la broma, as the Spaniards call them, more destructive at La Guaira than anywhere else in the world, commerce, which seems to be the only conservative thing in America, still keeps to its old route.

"So this is Venezuela, Little Venice," thought I to myself, as we lay tossing; "can't say I see much resemblance to Venice in these great mountains, that look as if they had been piled up by Titans to scale a city in the clouds!" Nor is there, through all the vast region now called Venezuela, much to remind one of the city of the doges. But it is at La Guaira that the unlikeness comes out most forcibly. It happens, though no one seems to have remarked it, that La Guaira is the very ὄμφαλος of the Venezuelan coast; for it lies half way between Cape Paria, on the extreme east, and Chichibocoa, on the extreme west, and just at La Guaira towers up La Silla, the tallest mountain between the Andes and the Atlantic; so that, instead of thinking of Venice, one cries out with Humboldt, "The Pyrenees or the Alps stripped of their snows, have risen from the bosom of the waters." Venezuela is a misnomer. The first Spaniards who came to the American coast, the Conquistadores, found the Indians of Maraycabo living in huts on piles in the lake, and so called that locality Venezuela; and the misnomer spread and spread till a region four times the size of Prussia came to be styled "Little Venice,"—a name which now comprehends a forest larger than France, steppes like those of Gobi, and mountain tracts which it would take many Switzerlands to match.

But for the abominable saltatory movements of the Yñez, I could have passed hours very contentedly with a fragrant cigar in my mouth, gazing from the sea at La Guaira, which is one of the most picturesque places in the world. Humboldt says there is nothing like it, save Santa Cruz, at the island of Teneriffe, where, as at La Guaira, the town, perched on a little rim of shore, at the foot of a tremendous peak, seems like a world's finger-post pointing to the littleness of man and the greatness of nature. Once landed, much of the effect is lost. There is then no more such startling contrast between the strip of white building at the sea's level, and the huge blue black and green masses of rock and earth heaped up into the very clouds; and it is no longer so easy to trace the long line of fortification mounting from height to height. Moreover, a mountain that starts up all at once, eight thousand feet from the sea, into the clouds, is a wondrous sight, and I looked and mused long. But my reverie was interrupted by those common-place, matter-of-fact fellows, the custom-house officers, who came on board punctually at six A.M., and showed at once that they had more of the Paul Pry than the poet in their natures. As nearly the whole revenues of the country, and the whole of their salaries (report says, something more than the whole), are drawn from the custom-house, there was some excuse for their energetic proceedings, which would, no doubt, have terminated in a rigid scrutiny of my numerous boxes, had I not been armed with the name of commissioner and a diplomatic passport. At sight of that document, the official tartness of their aspect sweetened to a smile, and they invited me to go ashore in their large comfortable boat: no slight favour at such a place as La Guaira.

Watching the auspicious moment when the frolicsome surge pitched the bow of the boat up within a foot of the landing-place on the pier, I made a spring, and was effectually prevented from falling back by half a dozen arms and hands, which snatched at every accessible part of me; one fellow, whose civility outran his discretion, giving me a sharp pinch as he clutched hold of my trousers. I was safe, however; I had landed; I stood for the first time on American ground, and I felt myself in a glow—but less, perhaps, from enthusiasm than from the intense heat consequent on the exertion of jumping from that tossing boat. There was, in reality, no great room for enthusiasm. Some dingy buildings now shut out the view of the mountains, and the atmosphere was so close, and so impregnated with the odour of decaying fish and other things still worse, that no enthusiasm could have withstood it. It would be well if the Venezuelans, so proud as they are of their country, so sensitive to the remarks of strangers, would prepare a cleanlier landing-place for their visitors. In other countries, foreigners who are to be propitiated are presented with bouquets of flowers. Columbia welcomes the traveller with a bouquet of a different kind. They were working away at the wharf and breakwater, which had already, they said, cost one hundred thousand pounds, though I suppose a tenth of that sum would have more than covered the outlay in England. Earth was coming down in buckets, which travelled on long ropes fastened at a considerable incline to posts at an eminence across the road, where the men were at work. These buckets came along with an impetus sufficient, had they

struck a passer-by, to knock his brains out; an accident which might easily have happened, for the ropes were stretched just at the height of a man, and no one gave any warning of their approach. On the left of the wharf was the harbour-master's house, and a nondescript building—something between an office and a fort, where a lot of Creole clerks were idling. In front, was the custom-house, and to the left of it the town. To the right, rose a long straggling line of filthy huts, swarming with naked darkie children.

We walked straight to the custom-house, a strong useful building, but not picturesque. The superintendent, an official of no little rank, for the appointment is the usual stepping-stone to the portfolio of finance, received me in his shirt-sleeves, with the inevitable cigarette in his mouth, and on reading the letter of introduction I had brought from a certain general, shook hands and told me he had been the general's A.D.C. in the war just concluded. The sun was already disagreeably hot, and I was glad to hurry on a few hundred yards up the principal of the two streets—which, with a branch or two climbing the mountain's base, form La Guaira—and take refuge in the hospitable house of the merchants to whom I was accredited. Having heard not a little of the wealth of the La Guaira merchants, I could not help venting my astonishment in a hearty *caramba*, when I entered the house. A huge outer door opened into a square court-yard, smelling strongly of turmeric, and half filled with bales of merchandise. The house was two-storied, the lower story containing a set of dingy offices, while the upper was divided into bedrooms, but the whole building looked so dirty and dilapidated, that I asked myself, "Can this be the residence of a merchant prince?" One of the partners, in whose apartment I found a piano, books, and some neat furniture, explained the mystery. There are only three or four tolerable houses in La Guaira, and he had been in vain trying to get one. This was simply a warehouse, and the other partners lived at Carácas. Juan, a mulatto servant, and a nigger boy, now set to work to get the spare room ready for me, and raised such clouds of dust as choked off for a time the mosquitoes, of which the atmosphere was full. They are a peculiarly sharp-stinging sort at La Guaira: small, speckled, and insatiable.

I was now fairly installed. The first thing that struck me was the intense heat. I had not then read Humboldt's Table, in which he compares the climates of Guaira, Cairo, Habana, Vera Cruz, Madras, and Abushahr, but without his assistance I arrived at his conclusion, that I was now in the hottest place in the whole world. Perhaps the best way of conveying to an European an idea of the heat, is to say that the mean temperature at La Guaira, in the coldest month, is four degrees of centigrade higher than that of the hottest month in Paris. If it be added that there are no appliances whatever to make things bearable — no good houses, no ice, no cold water, no shade, and no breeze, it will be possible to arrive at a faint notion of the reality. I was peculiarly well situated for promptly realising a just idea of the climate, for my room had but one small window, and when I opened it, there came in a perfume which obliged me to close it again instantly. The locality was, indeed, not very agreeable. The house almost abutted on the mountain, which of course kept off every breath of air. On one side was a boys' school, from which arose an incessant jabber, and on the ridge above us was a long building of very forbidding appearance.

"What place is that?" said I to Juan.

"That, sir?" replied he, with a beaming countenance. "That is the Small-pox Hospital, but there ain't no great number of cases there at present."

It was some alleviation of our misery that we took our meals in a building much higher up the hill, and, consequently, cooler than the warehouse in which we slept. The cuisine was tolerable, the poverty of the native supplies being eked out with European stores. The wine was hot; but there were good Clicquot and Rhenish wines in abundance, and intense thirst made us indiscriminating.

There are no Englishmen at La Guaira, and, consequently, no out-of-door amusements. No one walks, rides, rows, nor sails, for pleasure. The Europeans, who are chiefly Germans from Hamburg, confine themselves strictly to smoking, drinking, playing whist and billiards. It would be quite easy to have a good place for driving and riding by the sea-shore, but, everybody tries to make the approach to the sea as inaccessible as possible.

In my first walk I took a look at the hotel, and saw ample reason for congratulating myself that I had found other quarters. It was a very poor posada indeed, and the reek of garlic made me quite giddy. Garlic, by-the-by, is as dear to a Venezuelan as the shamrock to an Irishman, and one feels surprised that it is not adopted as the national emblem. I was assured by a traveller that he had exhausted his inventive powers in devising means to escape eating of dishes flavoured with this herb, but all in vain. As a dernier ressort, and when half starved, he determined to live on eggs, but the fatal fragrance pursued him still, much to his astonishment as well as disgust. At last, on carefully examining an egg before attempting to eat it, he found that the small end had been perforated, and some of the favourite herb introduced by the innkeeper, who was resolved that the national taste should be vindicated, and that, too, ab ovo and in extremis. From the inn I went to make my first purchase, one naturally suggested to me by my visit to the posada. I went to buy some medicine at a botica, or apothecary's shop. As my Spanish was not very profound, I was glad to find a German in the shop, and to

him I explained that I wanted a blue pill. Hereupon he took down a book of prescriptions, and set to work to find out how to make it. After some search, he began compounding the pills with pestle and mortar. As I had no great faith in his knowledge, I thought I would take a peep at the book, which was in Spanish, for, to quote a certain advertisement, "I could read and write Spanish, though I could not yet speak it." What was my horror, when I discovered that the apothecary was making me up a pill for leprosy! "Oh!" I exclaimed, "by-the-by, I think I won't trouble you to compound that pill for me;" and, snatching up a box, labelled "Brandreth's Pills," I paid him for it, and walked off, too glad to escape. This German had, no doubt, failed in some other métier, and had taken up a trade in drugs without knowing much about them. Before I left America I saw empirics more than enough.

After experiencing the disagreeables of the sea-shore promenade at La Guaira, I took to climbing the mountain for a constitutional. So disinclined are the Venezuelans to exercise, that I had the greatest difficulty in persuading a friend to accompany me. He was a very handsome, tall, well-made fellow, and the son of an Englishman, but, having been born in the country, had much of the Creole indolence in his nature. We used to ascend about twelve hundred feet, and for that distance there was a succession of forts; one of these, the Cerro Colorado, completely commanded the town. These forts now lie in ruins, having been taken by the revolutionary forces in 1859. They had three columns of one thousand men each, and came down from the heights to the attack. About one hundred and fifty men were killed on both sides, and the dead were all buried in one common grave. The man who fought best in the whole force engaged, was a gigantic negro artilleryman on the side of the aristocrats, who occupied the forts. He did a good deal of execution with his gun, which, even after he was wounded in many places, he continued to fire. At last he was struck on the back by a large ball from a swivel-gun, while he was in the act of re-loading his cannon. When they came to collect the corpses for interment he was found still breathing, and was taken to a doctor, from whom I heard the whole story, and who assured me that, though tetanus supervened, the negro recovered from his wounds. "This," said the medico, "was the only case of recovery from lock-jaw that I have ever witnessed."

After toiling up the mountain by a steep zigzag path, we used to descend a ravine, in which flows a rivulet dignified by the name of the Rio de la Guaira. This stream is usually about ten inches deep, but sometimes is swelled by the rains into a formidable torrent. Thus, in 1810, it swelled suddenly, after a heavy rain in the mountains, to a stream ten feet deep, and swept away property to the value of half a million of dollars, as well as many persons, of whom forty were drowned. There is a sickly yellow-feverish smell in this ravine; nevertheless, numbers of people bathe in the pools it forms at every broad ledge of rock. One of these pools is called the Consul's Bath, owing to a piece of scandal in which an English Lurline was concerned. Of the three routes to Carácas from La Guaira, the shortest, but most difficult and dangerous, passes for some distance up this ravine. It is called the Indian's Path, and is actually that which was used by the Indians before the Spanish conquest. Between it and the present coach-road is the road which was in use when Humboldt visited the country. I was anxious to make trial of all three, but being invited to breakfast at the Rincon, or Corner, a pretty country-seat beyond Maquetia, I determined to go by that road first.

It was nine A.M., on the 10th of July, when I left La Guaira, accompanied by my friend and Juan. The sun was terrifically hot, but the prospect of being jolted over the chaotic road to Maquetia being more terrible still, we resolved to walk to the Rincon, and let the coach, which we had engaged for our exclusive use, pick us up there. The said coach appeared to be considerably smaller than the smallest four-wheeled cab in London, and was so vamped up, and moved so heavily, and with such a flapping of doors, that I quite agreed with Juan, when he, unconscious of a pun, called out to the driver to get on with his vampiro. We walked, as I have said, to Maquetia, and turned gladly out of its dirty streets up a lane bursting with flowering shrubs, which led to the Rincon. Presently, we were aware of two female figures ahead of us, the figures evidently of two young and well-shaped Creole ladies. Before long, one of them dropped a kerchief and a prayer-book, which I picked up, and found they belonged to la Señorita Trinidad Smith. Not being used to Spanish nomenclature, Trinity struck me as a curious christian name, but my friend told me it was nothing to what I should meet with. Thus Dolores, or Pangs, is a most favourite baptismal appellation; and even Dolores Fuertes, Strong Pangs, is not uncommon. These strange christian appellations sometimes yield a curious sense when added to certain proper names. C. gave me, as an instance, the case of a lady christened Dolores Fuertes, who married a gentleman named Battiga, thus the whole name stood Strong Pangs of the Stomach.

The Rincon is a pretty little country-house, very like an Indian bangla, at the foot of a deep ravine in the mountain. All around were trees and shrubs in profusion, so that it was really "life in the bush." On my proposing to take a walk in the garden, the lady of the house said, very naïvely, that there were a great many snakes there, particularly rattlesnakes: an

observation which rather damped my ardour. The breakfast-party was large; there were ourselves, several Creole ladies and gentlemen, two French officers, and five children. Among the things at table with which I was not familiar, were a párga fish weighing fifteen pounds, the alligator, or, as it ought to be called, advocate's pear, and the fruit of the passion-flower creeper, which is as big as a pumpkin, and not less insipid. The párga might be called the sea-perch for its colour, shape, and taste. It is common enough, and I had seen it before, but never of such a size. The alligator pear has been often described, and it is said that a good deal of practice in eating it is needed before a relish for it can be acquired. To me its flavour seemed to be a compound of the tastes of pumpkin, melon, and very mouldy Stilton cheese.

At two P.M., our shambling equipage, the vampiro, came flapping up to the door, drawn by three rat-like ponies, who, however, soon proved that they had some mettle in them. The road, which is about twenty-five feet broad, and not an intolerably bad one after fairly quitting Maquetia, skirts, in a perpetual zigzag, the eastern side of the great ravine called Quebráda de Tipe. The western side of this ravine, which is a mile or two broad, leads directly from Carácas to the Bay of Catia, already mentioned as a desirable harbour. Along this side of the ravine, surveys for a railroad were made by Stephenson, which have been repeated by a gentleman who arrived at Carácas at the same time as myself. The difficulties of this route for locomotives are, perhaps, not insurmountable, but they seem at least to be greater than any that have yet been overcome elsewhere.

For the first thousand feet of elevation our progress was slow, as the clouds of red dust were literally suffocating, and the heat so great that even the case-hardened driver was fain to take things quietly. Besides, no little management was required in order to pass safely the strings of cattle, asses, and pedestrians, and the numerous carts we met or overtook. When once we had reached the elevation of a thousand feet, we perceived a marked change in the temperature, and began to be repaid for our previous sufferings by a fine view over the Quebráda, the narrow line of coast and the ocean. The whole distance, between Maquetia and Carácas by this road, is about twenty miles, while, as the crow flies, from La Guaira to Carácas is not more than nine miles. Here and there we came to a venta, or poor inn, where the carters, carriers, and coachmen get a drink of aguardiente, or fire-water, as rum is here called, while their wretched animals take a few minutes' rest, if rest that can be called which is robbed of its solace by the swarms of flies. At one place our coachman, an Italian (it is curious that the principal Jehus on this road are Italians), requested us to hold our noses, at the same time applying the lash vigorously to his ponies. As we galloped by, a flock of zamuros, or small vultures, rose from the body of a horse, which might very easily have been pitched over the precipice by its owner; but no South American would ever think of giving himself a little trouble to oblige the public. We stopped at a venta half way, and changed horses. Three or four rough-looking fellows, with guns and dogs, were smoking there. They said they had been out all day, and had killed four quail, and *seen* a few partridges. We had now ascended about five thousand feet, and it was comparatively quite cold. The road, too, was less steep, and we started with our fresh horses at great speed. This rate of travelling is not so pleasant on such a road to those who cross it for the first time. The turns were so abrupt as to be quite invisible while one was approaching the precipice, from which they diverged almost at right angles. We seemed to be galloping straight into the abyss, and we did reach its very brink, and then swept round by a turn in the road, which only at that moment showed itself. Until habit deadens sensation, one cannot but feel a little nervous at such charioteering, and the more so as dreadful accidents have actually occurred. There are similar roads over the mountains in Peru, and it is said that a late president of that country got so alarmed on one occasion, that he shouted out to the youth who was driving, to stop. The mozo, however, rather enjoying the joke, drove on faster than ever, till the president, drawing out a pistol, called to him that he would shoot him dead unless he pulled up instantly. This was a hint not to be disregarded, so the youth obeyed, but turned round and said, with the usual freedom or impudence of the country, "Truly you're a fine fellow to be President of Peru, if you are afraid at such a trifle as this."

Two miles from the place of changing horses, the road begins to descend, and we went on with increasing speed. The road now grew narrower and narrower at every turn, and the view more confined. At length, about half-past five P.M., we came suddenly in sight of Carácas, which is not seen from any distance by this route. About fifty students, wandering in cap and gown along the road, were the first sign of our approaching the capital. We next plunged into some dirty lanes, and then suddenly emerged into the paved streets of the city. Along these, Francisco, our driver, urged his ponies with all the speed they could muster, at the same time cracking his whip with reports like those of a pistol, to announce his arrival. The result of all this energy was, that we were pitched against one another, and up to the roof of the coach, in a way that nearly dislocated our necks, and utterly destroyed any dignity that we might otherwise have assumed. The streets were full of holes, over which we bounded in the most unpleasant fashion, till we pulled up dead, with a jerk that nearly sent us out of the windows, at

the door of St. Amande's Hotel, where the Brazilian minister's rooms had been engaged for me.

HALF A MILLION OF MONEY.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "BARBARA'S HISTORY."

CHAPTER LXXVI. THE CRY OF THE CHIU.

THEIR path lay down by the shore, and the sun was low before they reached the house of which they were in search. It was a large, rambling, half-ruinous place, with the discoloured plaster all scaling away from the walls; an old stone trough standing out in the road close by, and bundles of stored hay and straw sticking out through the shutterless windows of the basement story. A few half-starved oxen were lying about on the scant sward behind the house; a cock strutted on the dunghill before the door; and two sickly-looking women plied their distaffs under the shade of a vine in a crazy little pergoletta, overlooking the sea.

These women dropped their work with alacrity when accosted by Lord Castletowers, and hastened to provide the travellers with such poor fare as the place afforded. And it was poor enough: an omelette, a loaf of rye bread, a plate of salted fish, and a little fruit, was all they had to offer; but Saxon and Castletowers had not fasted all day for nothing. They feasted as heartily as if their table had been spread in the best hotel in Naples, and emptied a bottle of the thinnest country wine with as keen a gusto as if it had been "long imprisoned Cæcuban" or "fiery Falernian."

When at length they had eaten and drunk and were satisfied, and had recompensed the good women of the house for their hospitality, it was quite dusk—the magical dusk of an early autumn evening in south Italy, when the earth is folded to rest in a deep and tender gloom which scarcely seems like night, and the grass is alight with glowworms, and the air kindling with fireflies, and the sky one vast mosaic of stars.

The difficult part of their undertaking was now at hand. Even in traversing the coast-road between the podere and that point where their boat lay moored, they had to exercise all the discretion of which they were masters. It was important that they should neither attract, nor seem to avoid, observation. They had to tread lightly, without risking the appearance of caution; to walk neither slow nor fast; to avail themselves of the shelter of every rock, and wall, and bush along the road, and yet not to seem as if they were creeping in the shade; and, above all, to keep open eyes and ears, and silent tongues, for fear of surprise.

Going along thus, they soon left the solitary podere behind. There was no moon; but the darkness was strangely transparent, and the mountainous outlines of the twin islands, Ischia and Procida, were distinctly visible on the far horizon. Where the languid sea just glided to the shore, a shifting phosphorescent gleam faintly came and went upon the margin of the sands; and presently, lying a little off, with her sails all furled like the folded wings of a sleeping bird, the Albula came dimly into sight.

They paused. All was profoundly quiet. Scarce a breath disturbed the perfect stillness of sea and shore. Now and then a faint shiver seemed to run through the tall reeds down by the water's edge; but that was all. Had a pebble fallen, the young men must have heard it where they stood.

"I don't believe there's a living soul on this beach but ourselves," whispered Saxon.

"Heaven grant it!" replied the Earl, in the same tone.

"What shall we do next?"

"I think we cannot do better than go down to the boat, and there lie in readiness for whatever may happen."

They found the boat just where they had left it six or seven hours before, and their sailor lying in it at full length, fast asleep. Without rousing him, they crouched down in the shelter of the reeds, and waited.

"You have your revolver, Trefalden?" whispered the Earl.

"Yes, in my hand."

"And you can pull an oar, if necessary?"

"Of course."

The Earl sighed impatiently.

"This cursed arm," said he, "renders me more helpless than a woman. Hush! did you hear a footstep on the sand?"

"No; I heard nothing."

"Listen."

They listened breathlessly; but all was still, like death.

"There is something awful in the silence," said Saxon.

"I wish to Heaven we knew what the signal would be," muttered the Earl.

And then they lay a long time without speaking or moving.

"I feel as if my limbs were ossifying," whispered the Earl by-and-by.

"And I never longed so much in my life to do something noisy," replied Saxon. "I am at this moment possessed by an almost irresistible impulse to shout 'Viva Garibaldi!' Hush! what's that?"

It was a faint, plaintive, distant cry, like nothing that the mountaineer had ever heard before; but the Earl recognised it immediately.

"It is only the chiù," said he.

"The what?"

"The chiù—a little summer owl common throughout Italy. I almost wonder we have not heard it before; though, to be sure, the season is somewhat advanced."

"The creature has an unearthly note," said Saxon. "There, I heard it again."

"It seems to be coming this way," said Castletowers.

He had scarcely spoken, when the melancholy call floated towards them for the third time. Saxon dropped his hand suddenly upon his friend's shoulder.

"That is no owl's cry," he whispered. "It is a human voice. I would stake my life on it."

"No, no."

"I tell you, yes. It is the signal."

The Earl would not believe it; but Saxon imitated the note, and it was echoed immediately.

"There," said he, "I told you so."

"Nonsense; all owls will do that. I have made them answer me hundreds of times."

But Saxon pointed eagerly forward.

"Look!" he said; "look, close under that wall yonder. Don't you see something moving?"

The Earl stared into the darkness as if he would pierce through it.

"I think I do," he replied; "a something—a shadow!"

"Shall we not show ourselves?"

"Suppose it is a sentry! Try the cry again."

Saxon tried the cry again, and again it was promptly echoed. He immediately roused the sleeping seaman, and stepped out cautiously beyond the shelter of the reeds.

As he did so, the shadow under the wall became stationary.

Then he listened, advanced a few paces, treading so lightly and swiftly that the sand scarcely grated under his feet; and, having traversed about half the intermediate distance, came to a halt.

He had no sooner halted, than the shadow was seen to move again, and steal a few yards nearer.

And now Saxon, watching the approaching form with eyes trained to darkness and distance, was struck with a sudden conviction that it was not Colonna. As this doubt flashed through his mind, the shadow stopped again, and a low, distinct, penetrating whisper came to him on the air:

"Chi è?"

To which Saxon, quick as thought, replied:

"Montecuculi."

Instantly the shadow lifted its head, cried aloud, "Chiù! chiù! chiù!" three times in succession, and, leaving the gloom of the wall, came running up to Saxon where he stood. It was not Colonna, but a slight, active boy, clad in some kind of loose blouse.

"All's well," he said, in Italian. "Where is your boat?"

"Close at hand."

"Is all ready?"

"All."

"Quick, then! He will be here instantly."

They ran to the boat. The lad jumped in, the sailor grasped his oars, Castletowers kept watch, and Saxon stood ready to shove off.

Then followed a moment of anxious suspense.

Suddenly the sharp, stinging report of a rifle rang through the silence. The boy uttered a half-suppressed cry, and made as if he would fling himself from the boat; but Saxon, with rough kindness, thrust him back.

"You young fool!" said he, authoritatively, "sit still."

At the same moment they beheld the gleam of a distant torch, heard a rush of rapid footfalls on the beach, and saw a man running down wildly towards the sea.

Saxon darted out to meet him.

"Courage!" he cried. "This way."

But the fugitive, instead of following, staggered and stood still.

"I cannot," he gasped. "I am exhausted. Save yourselves."

A tossing fire of torches was now visible not a couple of hundred yards away in the direction of Cumæ, and more than one bullet came whistling over the heads of those on the beach.

In the mean while, Saxon had taken Colonna up bodily in his arms, and strode with him to the boat, like a young giant.

As he did this, a yell of discovery broke from the lips of the pursuers. On they came, firing and shouting tumultuously; but only in time to see the boat shoved off, and to find a broad gap of salt water between themselves and their prey.

"Viva Garibaldi!" shouted Saxon, firing his revolver triumphantly in their faces.

But the lad in the blouse snatched it from his hand.

"Give me the pistol," he said, "and help with the oars. How can we tell that they have no boat at hand?"

The boy now spoke in English, but Saxon scarcely noticed that in the overwhelming excitement of the moment. The voice, however, sounded strangely familiar, and had a ring of authority in it that commanded obedience. Saxon relinquished the weapon instantly, and flung himself upon his oars. The boy, heedless of the bullets that came pattering into the water all about their wake, leaned over the gunwale and discharged the whole round of cartridges. The soldiers on the beach, looking gaunt and shadowy by the waving torchlight, fired a parting volley. In the mean while, the boat bounded forward under the double impulse, and in a few more seconds they were, if not beyond range, at all events beyond aim in the darkness.

CHAPTER LXXVII. A WET SHEET AND A FLOWING SAIL.

Pulling swiftly and strongly, the rowers threw a fierce energy into their work that soon left the reedy shore far enough behind. Each moment the glare of the torchlight grew fainter on the shore. Each moment the hull of the Albula seemed to become bigger and blacker. In the mean while, no one spoke. The boy, having fired out all Saxon's cartridges, crept to Colonna's side, and there crouched silently. The Italian had sunk exhausted in the bottom of the boat, and lay with his head and shoulders leaning up against the side; Castletowers steered, and the two others bent and rose upon their oars with the precision of automatons.

Presently they shot alongside the yacht, and were hailed by the familiar voice of Saxon's

honest master. Then a light flashed overhead, a rope was thrown and caught, a ladder lowered, and in a few seconds they were all on board.

"Thank Heaven, you're safe!" exclaimed Lord Castletowers, turning to Colonna, as soon as his foot touched the deck.

But the Italian leaned heavily upon his shoulder, and whispered:

"Hush! Take me below. I am wounded."

"Wounded?"

"Not so loud, I implore you—not a word here!"

"But not badly?"

"I don't know—I fear so."

"Good God, Colonna!"

The crew were busy hauling in the boat, and unfurling the sails. Even the boy and Montecuculi were doing what they could to help; for life and liberty depended now upon the speed with which they could put the yacht before what little breeze was blowing. They must get away, no matter in which direction. It was the one vital, imperative, overruling necessity.

Under cover of the haste and confusion on deck, Lord Castletowers helped his friend down the cabin stairs, assisted him to the sofa, struck a light, and hastened to examine his wound.

"Where are you hurt?" he asked, eagerly.

"Lock the door first."

Wondering somewhat at the request, the Earl obeyed. Then Colonna, with his own hands, opened the bosom of his shirt, and Castletowers saw that he was wounded just above the left breast, about an inch below the collar-bone. The spot where the ball had penetrated was surrounded by a broad purple margin; but there was very little blood, and scarcely any laceration of the flesh.

"It does not look so bad," said the Earl, "and seems scarcely to have bled at all."

"It is bleeding inwardly," replied Colonna, feebly. "Give me a little brandy."

The Earl hesitated.

"I am not sure that you ought to have it," he said.

"I must have it—I—I"

His voice faltered, and a ghastly look came upon his pallid face.

"I will call Montecuculi," said the Earl, with a throb of sudden, undefined terror. "He understands these things better than I do."

Colonna half raised himself upon the couch.

"No, no," he gasped; "wait—do not alarm"

Then, making a desperate effort to articulate, he pointed to his throat, and fell back insensible.

At this moment some one tried the cabin door on the outside, and, finding it bolted, tapped loudly on the panels.

The Earl rushed to open it.

"Run," he cried, seeing the boy whom they had just brought off from shore; "fetch some cold water—call Signor Montecuculi! Quick—the Colonna is badly wounded, and has fainted away!"

But the lad, instead of obeying, thrust the Earl aside, uttered a piercing cry, and flung himself upon his knees beside the sofa.

"My father!" sobbed he, passionately. "Oh, my father!"

Lord Castletowers drew back, full of amazement and pity.

"Alas!" he said, in a low tremulous tone. "Miss Colonna!"

In the mean while, those on deck were moving heaven and earth to put as many miles of sea as might be possible between the yacht and the coast. The breeze was languid and fitful; but, such as it was, they spread their sails to it, and, tacking about, made some little progress.

By degrees, the shadowy outline of the hills faded away in the darkness, and shortly after midnight a brisk south-west wind sprung up, as if on purpose for their service.

All that night they ran before the breeze, making close upon fifteen knots an hour, and bearing right away for Corsica. All that night Giulio Colonna lay in the little cabin below the deck of the Albula, sometimes conscious, sometimes unconscious, passing from fainting fit to fainting fit, and growing hourly weaker.

CHAPTER LXXVIII. "THE NOBLEST ROMAN OF THEM ALL."

Pale, silent, unwearied, Olimpia sat beside her father's couch through all the hours of that dreary night, wiping the cold dews from his brow, bathing his wound, and watching over him with a steady composure that never faltered. Sometimes when he moaned, she shuddered; but that was all.

Towards dawn, the Earl beckoned Saxon quietly away, and they went up on deck. The morning was now grey above their heads, and there was no land in sight. The breeze had dropped with the dawn, and the Albula was again making but little way. Both sea and sky looked inexpressibly dreary.

"How does he seem now?" asked Montecuculi, hastening towards them.

The Earl shook his head.

"Sinking slowly, I fear," he replied. "The fainting fits are longer each time, and each time leave him weaker. The last endured for twenty-seven minutes, and he has not spoken since."

The Ferrareso threw up his hands despairingly.

"Dio!" he exclaimed; "that it should end thus!"

"And that it should end now," added Castletowers. "Now, when the great work is so nearly accomplished, and the hour of his reward was close at hand!"

"How does the signora bear it?"

"Like a Colonna—nobly."

"I will go down and share her watch while you remain on deck. It is something to look upon him while he is yet alive."

With this the young Italian stole gently down the cabin stairs, leaving Saxon and Castletowers alone.

"Alas! Trefalden," said the Earl, after a

long silence, "this is a calamitous dawn for Italy."

"Do you not think he will live the day out?"

"I think that he is going fast. I do not expect to hear him speak again in this world—I scarcely expect to see him alive at noon."

"If we had only kept that surgeon with us one week longer!"

"Ay—if we had!"

"Poor Olimpia!"

"Poor Olimpia, indeed! I dread to think of all she has yet to suffer."

And they were silent again.

"I cannot conceive what we are to do, Trefalden, when—when it is all over," said Lord Castletowers, presently.

"Nor I."

"He ought to rest with his own people; and it must be my task to convey his poor remains to Rome; but, in the mean while, what is to become of her?"

"I can escort her to England."

"Impossible, my dear fellow! You have not the time to travel slowly. You ought, even now, to be night and day upon the road; and, do what you will, may still be in London too late!"

"Stay," replied Saxon, quickly; "I can suggest a plan. I know of two ladies—English ladies—who are now residing at Nice. My cousin knows them well; and if Miss Colonna would consent to accept their protection till such time as you had returned from Rome, and could take her to Castletowers . . ."

"An excellent idea, Trefalden—nothing could be better!"

At this moment Montecuculi came back, anxious and agitated.

"You had better come down," he said, in a low, awe-struck tone. "I think he is dying."

"So soon!"

"Indeed, I fear it."

They went. Colonna still lay as when they saw him last, with his head supported against a pile of pillows, and a blanket thrown across his feet and knees; but it needed no second glance to see that a great change had taken place within the last half hour. A ghastly, grey hue had spread itself over his face; his eyes seemed to have sunk away into two cavernous hollows; and his very hands were livid. For two hours he had not moved hand or foot. For more than two hours he had not spoken. His heart still beat; but, so feebly, that its action could with difficulty be detected by the ear, and not at all by the hand. He still breathed; but the lungs did their work so languidly, and at such long intervals, that a stranger would have taken him for one quite dead. Now and then, not oftener than once in every fifteen or twenty minutes, a slight spasmodic shudder, like the momentary ruffling of still waters, passed over him as he lay; but of this, as of all else, he was profoundly unconscious.

"Has he moaned of late?" asked Lord Castletowers.

Olimpia, with one of her father's cold hands pressed between her own, and her eyes intently fixed upon his face, shook her head silently.

"Nor moved?"

She shook her head again.

After this, the Earl stood for a long while looking down upon the face of his early friend. As he did so, his eyes filled with tears, and his heart with sorrowful memories—memories of days long gone by, and incidents till now forgotten. He saw himself again a boy at Colonna's knee. He remembered boyish pleasures promoted, and vacation rambles shared. He thought of classic readings under summer trees; of noble things said, and done, and hoped for; of high and heroic counsel solemnly given; of privations uncomplainingly endured; of aspirations crushed; of arduous labour unrecompensed; of a patriotism which, however mistaken in many of its aims, was as gallant and ardent as that of the noblest Roman of them all. Remembering these things—remembering, too, the open hand, the fearless heart, the unstained honour which had characterised the dying man in every relation and act of his unselfish life, the Earl felt as if he had never done justice to his virtues till this moment.

"Alas, poor Italy!" he said aloud; and the tears that had been slowly gathering in his eyes began to fall.

But at that word—that omnipotent word which for so many years had ruled the beatings of his heart, coloured his every thought, and shaped his every purpose—a kind of strange and sudden thrill swept over Colonna's face. A livid mask but the instant before, it now seemed as if lighted from within. His eyelids quivered, his lips moved, and a faint sound was audible in his throat.

"Oh God!" cried Olimpia, flinging herself upon her knees beside him, "he is about to speak!"

The Earl held up his hand, in token of silence.

At that moment the dying man opened his eyes, and a rapt, radiant, wonderful smile came upon all his face, like a glory.

"Italia!" he whispered; "Italia!"

The smile remained; but only the smile. Not the breath—not the spirit—not Giulio Colonna.

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AT THE BAR.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "A CRUISE UPON WHEELS," &c. &c.

CHAPTER XXIII. BALAAM AND BALAK.

THE vindictive spirit of Jane Cantanker was quite insatiable in its desire for the consummation of Gabrielle Penmore's ruin. One would have said that already this poor lady was deeply enough involved in toils, partly of her own weaving, and partly of the Cantanker construction; but it appears that she was not sufficiently compromised yet to satisfy her deadly enemy.

Miss Cantanker was gifted, among other qualities, with an amount of superstition, which she took so much pains to conceal, that no one who knew her would ever have thought of giving her credit for its possession. Nothing would have induced her to sit down, under any circumstances, to any meal at which twelve other persons were to assist. She would never begin any undertaking of any sort soever on a Friday. If her nails had suddenly grown an inch long in the course of Thursday night, they would have had to remain as they were, at whatever inconvenience, till Saturday morning, as they must not, under any circumstances, be cut on a Friday, and that must have been, indeed, a desirable object of attainment which she would have passed under a ladder to reach. But strongest with her amongst all these convictions, was a firm belief in the efficacy of charms, and the power which certain individuals possessed of bewitching others and working them mischief by means of spells, incantations, and other similar engines of destruction. Such a creed as this tends very materially to increase the difficulties of human life, it being no use to attempt even to prosper if you feel convinced that some invisible influence is at work to frustrate all your best efforts, and render them utterly unavailing. Leave undone what you may, and you must still prosper, if favourable influences hover over you. Work as you like, take all the means of succeeding within your reach, and make the most of them, and still you may fail, if the evil charm is at work against you.

Now, such being the creed of Miss Cantanker, it is surely not to be wondered at that in a concern to which she attached so much importance as this of bringing poor Gabrielle Penmore to destruction, she should desire to enlist upon her side those terrible influences in which she held such firm belief. She *did* desire to avail herself of them, but there was a difficulty.

In a certain small court or alley which led out of a by-street in the neighbourhood of the Edgeware-road, there had lived formerly a certain old woman with whom Cantanker had had dealings, and who could, horrible to relate, charm you or counter-charm you out of house and home in no time. For the rest, she was a most fascinating specimen of humanity, with a hoarse voice, a brown wig, and fluffy grey hairs curling beautifully about her mouth and chin. She was the terror of all the neighbouring children, and had such a reputation for supernatural gifts, that when she died, at the ripe age of ninety-four, it was looked upon as quite a piece of self-denial on her part, as it was certain that, with her capacity, she might have gone on for another hundred years or so, at least if she had thought proper.

Now, by the death of this good lady, it happened that Jane Cantanker was cut off from all the resources of a spiritual nature to which she had been wont to have recourse, and on which she had been accustomed to depend. She could neither procure spells with which to confound her enemies, nor could she shelter herself under counter-charms from the devices which those enemies might practise against herself. It was terrible to be left thus unaided by supernatural influences, and unprotected from them as well. What was to be done?

Of course the natural way out of the difficulty, and that which common sense, supposing it to have anything to do with such an affair, would suggest, was to find a successor to the wise woman of the Edgeware-road, some one on whom her mantle might be supposed to have fallen. For such a person Miss Cantanker had long been on the look-out, and it seemed at last that the search was to be rewarded with success.

Miss Cantanker had a friend who kept a "general shop" not far from Beaumont-street, and with whom it was her habit to hold long conversations over the counter whenever her occasions took her into the street in which the "general shop" was situated. This friend was also a believer in necromancy, and attached as much importance to the good or evil offices of those who dealt in it, as Jane Cantanker herself. There are more of these believers than people

generally imagine, and even now, in this enlightened nineteenth century, we have only to study that brief epitome of the times—the newspaper—to see how widely-extended among our lower classes is the belief in witchcraft and its terrible influences.

Now it so happened that this worthy general dealer, who had felt the loss of the wise woman of the Edgeware-road almost as much as any of her clientèle, had been informed by some of her friends of the extraordinary powers of a supernatural kind possessed by our old friend Cornelius Vampi, to which powers rumour had, as usual, done something more than justice, gifting him not only with marvellous capabilities of vaticination and fortune-telling, but also with such gifts, in the way of casting spells and bestowing charms, as rendered him at once the most desirable of allies and the most dangerous of enemies—a man, in fact, who could wither up one of your legs, or cover you with sores from head to foot, by simply scribbling a few words on a piece of parchment, or burning a handful of herbs in an old chafing-dish.

"In short, dear," said the good lady in the "general" line, at the conclusion of a long discourse on the subject of Mr. Vampi's qualifications, "I should say—for I only know of him by hearsay, and have never consulted him myself—that he's the kind of man whom, if you want anything to turn up trumps, you should get upon your side, while, if there's anything equally that you'd like to see going to the dogs, you couldn't possibly do better than set him agin it. And this I'm sure of, that Walter's little girl, which, as you know, is withered up like any mummy, was bewitched by this very Mr. Vampi from the first—as sure, ay, as sure as its parents was both first cousins, and eaten hup with scrofiler on both sides."

It was not likely that Jane Cantanker would be able to resist the opportunity of securing the services of such a person as this, and so it happened that on that very evening of the day on which the inquest had been held at the Duke of Cumberland, she set out with the distinct intention of finding out Mr. Cornelius Vampi and securing his services, as Balak sought to get those of Balaam, for the confusion of his enemy.

There was not much difficulty in finding, by the description which she had obtained from her friend, the abode of Mr. Vampi. If there had been nothing but the owl in spectacles which stood in the window to know it by, that would still have been enough; so Cantanker turned into the shop without much hesitation—indeed, she was not one of the hesitating sort—and looked about her for some one answering to the description which she had received of the astrologer.

He was evidently not there. So Cantanker went up to the counter to see if there was any one to whom she could apply for information as to when and where he could be found. The shop was, as usual, pretty full, and an old man and a lad behind the counter were both engaged already two or three deep. An old woman—no other, indeed, than our friend Mrs. Smaggsdale—came forward to meet her.

"Want Mr. Vampi, do you?" she inquired. "What is it? Corns?"

"No, certainly not."

"Bunions, then, or warts?"

"No, no, nothing of the sort at all. I want to see him, Mr. Vampi himself."

"Oh, you want to see him himself, do you? Ah, then, its 'oroscopes, or fortune-telling, or something of that sort. Here, Smagg," continued the Sceptic, "it's somebody wanting the governor, and nobody else will do."

"Very well," replied the other, "I'll step up and tell him. No particular message, is there?" he added, addressing Cantanker.

"No, only that I want to see him, if it's only for a minute or two."

"There's pretty nigh everything about the business," said Mrs. Smaggsdale, addressing the mysterious customer with something of contempt, "as I can attend to myself. Herbs and seeds, and corn plaisters, and purifying pills, and cures for the toothache, and marking-ink, and what not. But when it comes to 'oroscopes, I ain't no use at all, and what's more, I don't care if I never am."

Meanwhile, Mr. Smaggsdale ascended the stairs which led to the observatory, and in due time found himself in the presence of the great astrologer himself.

"Please, sir, you're wanted below, if you can make it convenient," gasped the messenger, for he was considerably out of breath with the ascent. "Lady wants you," he continued, with another gasp.

"Lady?" echoed the sage, quickly. "What lady? not——"

"Not *the* lady. No, sir, she haven't been."

"Strange," muttered the philosopher to himself; "I never knew her fail to come when she had said she would."

"Ah, she *was* a punctual one," remarked Smagg, corroboratively, "was the strange lady."

"And this other lady," inquired Cornelius, "won't she tell you her business?"

"No," replied the little man. "She ain't exactly a lady, you know. But be that as it may, it's you she wants to see, and nobody else."

"Well, then, you must ask her if she'll take the trouble to come up. I can't leave what I'm about just now, as you see."

The philosopher did indeed seem to be most especially busy. He was in the act of making some excessively intricate preparation over the fire. It was something which appeared to require incessant stirring, and equally incessant additions of some boiling liquid, which was turned on by means of a tap from an immense copper caldron stewing over the fire. The philosopher wore a costume which was reserved for his chemical experiments—a sort of enormous pinafore with sleeves. The necessity for the adoption of some such dress while practical chemistry was being carried on, was shown by

the number of splashes with which the pinafore was decorated. The garment reached to the sage's heels, and showed his vast stature to the greatest advantage. He wore a white cap, moreover, and presented altogether a somewhat startling appearance.

"She's to come up, is she?" inquired Smaggsdale, hesitatingly.

"Yes, certainly. If she'll take the trouble," replied the astrologer, who was always courteous.

"Won't you—won't you take your gownd off?"

"No, I couldn't do that, Smagg. This mixture isn't half done yet, and I must finish the composition to-night, because it was begun under Saturn, and must, if possible, be finished under the same conditions."

Old Smagg was in one of his sceptical moods, so he made no answer, and withdrew.

"She never failed before," muttered Cornelius to himself, reverting again to the subject which had just before occupied him. "And she mentioned the day so particularly—and then there was her future, which I couldn't get a glimpse of—another reason why she should be specially anxious to come. Not," continued the chemist, turning on a new supply of liquor from the caldron, and stirring more vehemently than ever, "not that I've any more definite intelligence for her if she does come. I've had no better luck, and what was a blank before is a blank still, and seems likely to remain so, as far as I can see."

The philosopher was disturbed in his reflections by a smart rap at the door—a rap, indeed, such as never could have emanated from the vacillating knuckles of the doubtful Smaggsdale. In fact, it was that gentleman's better-half, who, in consideration of her husband's breathless condition, had consented to show Miss Cantanker the way to the sanctum.

"Party for a horror-scope," said the worthy lady, flinging open the door abruptly.

"Horoscope, woman!" retorted the philosopher.

"Ah, well. It don't much matter."

"Yes, but I tell you that it does matter. These things are of too great importance to be thus flippantly dealt with: where's your husband?"

"He's trying to catch his breath. He lost it coming up here last time."

"Well, tell him to come up himself next time. You may go."

"Oh yes, I'll go fast enough. I don't want *my* fortune told," and she flounced out of the room, leaving Miss Cantanker staring in some astonishment at all that she saw and heard.

"That woman is a source of great annoyance to me," said the philosopher in an explanatory manner. "If it was not for her husband, I would get rid of her."

The person thus addressed remained speechless. Indeed, she was too much astonished to say anything. The novelty of the scene, and the extraordinary aspect presented by our experimentalist, were too much even for Cantanker.

In truth, it must be owned that the appearance of the great man *was* a little out of the ordinary way. His costume alone, coupled with his great size, would have been enough to startle anybody; but, in addition to this, it must be taken into consideration by the reader, who would form an idea of Mr. Vampi's appearance, that his countenance had at this time contracted something of the flaming quality of the furnace over which he had been bending, and was suffused with a hue of the deepest crimson, thrown out in tremendous relief by his white robes and cap. It was a wondrous apparition, then, that stood before Miss Cantanker, as the philosopher turned round, pipkin in hand, to address her.

"You wished to consult me, I think," said Cornelius, pulling off his cap to make a bow. "I am here, at your service."

Cantanker was a little puzzled how to begin. Cornelius Vampi was a very different person from the Sibyl of the Edgeware-road. The very benevolence of his aspect made Cantanker's proposal all the more difficult. How could she ask that innocent, philanthropical-looking creature to curse her enemy?

She looked round about the room in her perplexity as to how to begin. There was a set of colossal drawings on pasteboard of the signs of the zodiac hung on the walls. They looked very large and truculent, and as her eye lit upon Cancer and Scorpio, she seemed to get encouragement. The man who could take delight in such things was not altogether without malignant capacity, she felt sure.

After once turning round to address her, Cornelius had returned immediately to the composition on which he was engaged. Cantanker could speak without having his eye upon her; that was something.

"I took the liberty of calling," she began, "in consequence of having heard from a friend that you were in the habit of having dealings with things that are altogether out of the common way, and in the supernatural line, the 'eavenly bodies, and fortune-telling, and such-like."

"You have heard rightly, ma'am," replied the philosopher. "To stand upon the very verge and limits of the visible and tangible world, and gaze forth into that world which is invisible and intangible, is the highest and most glorious achievement which belongs to man, and I frankly own that studies of the kind which you indicate, have formed a great part of the business of my life."

There was not much encouragement in this. It was not to inquire into the secrets which are hidden under the veil of futurity that Cantanker had come to visit the astrologer. She had come to enlist in his service an agency in whose efficacy she firmly believed, and which it seemed to her the extreme of folly to neglect.

"I suppose," she said, after a little reflection, "that you don't go through all this study of the stars and the 'eavenly bodies, and what not, without its giving you some power like over your fellow-creatures?"

"Power," echoed Vampi. "Of what sort?"

"Why, power to benefit them, or—or—maybe to injure them."

The astrologer lifted his eyes from the elixir in whose composition he was engaged, and fixed them upon his visitor. The result of his scrutiny seemed hardly satisfactory. His face wore a dissatisfied look as he returned to his pipkin. "Now, what is this woman driving at?" he said to himself.

"Power, both for good and evil I have undoubtedly," he said aloud, and Cantanker brightened up at the words. "For good, in that I can direct those whose future I make the subject of study, what they should do in certain emergencies, how they may make the most of the good chances which are to come in their way, and steer clear of dangers which menace them. In that way I have certainly power for good."

"And for evil?" asked the woman, eagerly.

"Power for evil," replied the philosopher, eyeing her curiously, "I might have in this way. I might see my client in peril, might feel certain that some Sword of Damocles was hanging over him, might see him drawing nearer at every step which he took to the precipice over which, unwarned, he would certainly fall, and might abstain from uttering the words which would turn him aside from the path of danger. All this I might do certainly, and so exercise a power for evil which, though negative, should be still of deadly efficacy."

"But it is more than this that I want," the woman went on, wrought up now to a revelation of the real object of her mission. "There is a person in existence who has been guilty of a crime which I desire to see avenged, who has struck at me, not indeed intentionally, but in striking at one whom I loved, and had loved for years, one whom it was my pride and happiness to serve, and who now lies dead and cold, murdered by the hand of this person of whom I speak, and against whom I would have you direct all the power of evil which you may possess, or can by any means gain through some of those secret arts that you practise."

"But is this person guilty?"

"Yes, a hundred times yes."

"Then, let justice do its work."

"Yes, and so it shall. But justice may fail. I want to be secure of my revenge. These magistrates and coroners, these judges and juries, may fail. I have no belief in them. They are fools, and a winning face and a seeming innocent manner may hoodwink them, and turn them from the truth. I want something more, I tell you. Can you give it me?"

"Give you what?"

"A charm, a spell—something that shall be as a curse upon this one of whom I speak—a curse under which she shall lie without power to rise—a spell that shall bind her hand and foot—a spell against her life, against the life of—you'll want her name; it's a French one, Gabrielle, don't forget it—Gabrielle Penmore. Draw up a curse—a witchcraft spell against that name."

"Stop, woman, stop," cried Cornelius. "I know nothing of such arts as these, nor wish to know."

"What! Have you given up your mind to studying the stars and learning all about their movements, and their twistings and turnings this way and that, and one circumventing another, and all the rest of it, and all to so little purpose, that you can't bring what you know to bear upon something useful, such as helping those you want to help, and crushing those you want to destroy? Are there no evil stars whose aid you can depend upon? Have you no incantations which compels their services, no spells which they cannot resist?"

Cornelius was almost terrified at the violence of his new client. In all his experience, no such person as this had ever come in his way.

"All these things that you speak of may be possible," he said at last, for he was unwilling to limit the capabilities of his art. "All this power may be mine——"

"'May be!'" repeated the woman, scornfully

"Yes, 'may be,'" repeated Cornelius, stoutly. "It is not for me to say how great are the resources of the art mystic, or what wondrous gifts it can confer upon its students. Twenty or thirty years is but a short time to have devoted to the arcana, and that is all the study I can boast of. It may be that additional years of research and thought might lead me on to additional discoveries, and to some among them which would impart such powers as those you speak of. But even were it so—were such capacity for evil within my grasp so that I should see the victim of my skill withering under my curse, consuming to nothing beneath my spell—know that this gift should lie unclaimed for me, from day to day, and from year to year. My ambition is to do good to man, not evil, to work out the relief of suffering humanity, not to lay fresh loads of sorrow on it. You are mistaken, ma'am, and have mistaken me. You have come to consult a Samuel, when you should have sought out a Witch of Endor."

The expression which developed itself upon the countenance of Jane Cantanker as she listened to this speech of the benevolent astrologer, was one of the most profound and unmitigated wonder, gradually merging into contempt and pity. For some time she remained silent, gazing at our stout philanthropist in speechless scorn. At last she rose to go.

"You are right," she said; "I have been mistaken. I came here thinking to find a man gifted with supernatural powers, and ready to turn them to some account; for I have money here. I came to buy a spell, not to beg one."

"You can neither buy nor beg aught of me," said Cornelius, rising in turn, and speaking with infinite dignity, "that shall do an injury to any member of the human race. You have mistaken me, as I said before, and I will now ask you to relieve this poor workshop, in which you have not found the wares you looked for, of your presence, and leave me as you found me—harmlessly at work."

And the astrologer took the lamp from the table and moved towards the door, ready to light his visitor down the stairs. There was a courtesy in his action which there was no resisting. His appearance was calm and unruffled, but his countenance was more grave than was its wont, and those who knew the philosopher's face would have been able to see that he had been much hurt by what had just taken place.

Jane Cantanker passed down the stairs and out of the house without another word being exchanged between her and the astrologer, who escorted her to the last. He heaved a deep sigh as he closed the door after her, and paused a moment before he again ascended the stairs.

"What was that name," he asked himself, "against which she bore such hatred? 'Gabrielle,' I remember, she spoke it twice. But I forget the other name. 'Gabrielle'—'Gabrielle'—no I have forgotten."

CHAPTER XXIV. THE CHAIN COMPLETE.

THREE days elapsed after the adjournment of the inquest before the inquiry was again resumed, and during this interval the police were hard at work trying to collect any additional evidence that might bear upon the case. Their chief object, of course, was to find out where that poison by which it had been conclusively proved that Miss Carrington had died had been procured. Her rooms were searched most diligently and thoroughly for any bottle or even a detached label which might indicate that she had bought the drug herself, and show where she had procured it. But no such thing could be found. It was then determined to take the different chemists' shops, beginning in the immediate neighbourhood, and gradually extending the operations to a wider radius, and to make inquiry at each, with a view of ascertaining whether any person answering to the description of the deceased lady had been there with the object of purchasing laudanum. The Trades Directory was consulted, and a list of the chemists and druggists extracted from it, a mark being set against the name of each member of the pharmaceutical fraternity as it appeared in the volume, thus: Roberts, James, ivory turner; *Groves, William, chemist; Peterkin, Andrew, licensed victualler; Roper, Thomas, basket-maker; Voker, Alfred, herbalist and seedsman; Snooks, Frederick, fancy stationer; *Drew, Jonas, chemist; and so on. The names of the chemists were then extracted with great ease, and written down upon paper.

The inquiries made by the police were—as far as the discovery of any purchase made by the deceased lady was concerned—entirely in vain. They could find no trace of any purchase of laudanum having been made by any such person. It was not long, however, before their researches were turned into another channel.

Jane Cantanker could find no rest for her soul while haunted by the thought that the murderer of her dear mistress—which, it must be remembered, she fully believed Mrs. Penmore to be—was going about, at large, and unpunished. So she also set herself to work in imitation of the police authorities to visit the different chemists' shops, but with a different discovery in view. She was on another track, the track of Gabrielle Penmore. Had *she* had laudanum in her possession about this time? Was it not more important to find that out than anything else? Was it not possible for her—Jane Cantanker—to make that great discovery?

It was so. She worked with a will, and very soon her efforts were crowned with success. At a chemist's shop not very far from the house in Beaumont-street, Cantanker discovered that Mrs. Penmore had been in the habit of dealing for medicine, and here she ascertained that on a certain day, some three weeks since, Gabrielle had made the damning purchase of a two-ounce bottle of laudanum!

Jane Cantanker's breath came thick and fast as she made this tremendous discovery, and her knees trembled so under her that she was hardly able to stand at the counter.

"Have you got that down in your book?" she said, as soon as she could trust herself to speak.

"Oh, certainly," replied the druggist, a smug gentleman in spectacles, who seemed much astonished.

"And there is no danger of it's being lost?"

"How can there be?" asked the other, with a touch of contempt in his tone, and giving his ledger an affectionate slap. "The book's big enough."

Cantanker waited a little, trying to remember whether she had any other question to ask.

"What, it's down in the big book?" she asked, with a gasp of satisfaction.

"Yes," said the chemist.

"What sort of a bottle would it be in?" she said. "A large bottle?"

"Two-ounce phial similar to this," replied the chemist, producing one, "made of blue glass, ribbed so as to affect the touch, orange label outside 'Poison,' and another 'for external use,' that being what it was wanted for."

"There's something up," remarked the chemist to his chief assistant, as Cantanker, after thanking him for his courtesy, and once more entreating him to be careful of the entry which told so important a tale, left the shop with hurried steps and with considerable agitation in her demeanour.

Cantanker made the best of her way to the police-station, and there imparted her story to the inspector on duty. She was beginning to be known here, and to be highly respected as well, in consequence of the decided and uncompromising manner in which she had conducted herself at the inquest. The inspector paid her a compliment or two on her energy and devotedness, and, after taking down what she had said, despatched one of his most trusted emissaries straight to the chemist's to take his deposition in form.

The policeman had a thick note-book bound

in calf, and interleaved with blotting-paper, in his hand when he entered the shop, and as he stood apart in close commune with the chemist, many a wandering glance, both on the part of the assistants behind and the customers before the counter, was directed towards the two.

"And so you let the lady 'ave it merely for the hasking?" remarked the constable.

"Yes, sir, such being our custom when we know the party."

"When you know the party," echoed the policeman, "and not otherwise?"

"On no account otherwise," replied the chemist.

"And this party you did know?"

"Oh dear yes, sir. The lady's dealt here scores and scores of times."

"But not for hopium?" urged the myrmidon of justice.

"No, sir; this was the first occasion of her making such a purchase."

The policeman waited a little while, and looked over the notes which he had made, appearing very well satisfied with them. Presently he spoke again, as if making a final inquiry.

"And did the lady state what she wanted it for?"

"External use, sir, as I said. The lady had passed many years of her life in a very hot climate, and it seemed that the change to our damp atmosphere and cold affected her with pains about the arms and shoulders, which she found were relieved by rubbing with laudanum, more than by any other means."

"Ha," said the policeman, "that was what she said, was it?"

"That was it, sir. So I made her up the two ounces and let her have it, merely cautioning her to keep it shut up, and out of the way of any person who might be injured by it. I bade her be particularly careful that way," remarked the chemist, afraid of getting into a scrape.

The policeman seemed now to have gained all the information that was necessary, and shut up his book.

"We shall most likely want you to repeat what you have just said in evidence, in the course of a day or two," he remarked, "so you'd better hold yourself in readiness."

"I'm not likely to get into any trouble about it, am I?" asked the druggist.

The policeman took time to consider the question, keeping the druggist in a state of agonising uncertainty the while.

"Not that I can see at present," he said at last; "but I can't say for certain."

The discovery of this purchase of laudanum on the part of Mrs. Penmore—a discovery due rather to Jane Cantanker's vigilance than that of the police authorities—altered the whole posture of affairs, and added so much to the strength of the evidence against Gabrielle, as to justify the adoption of such measures as might tend to decide at once the question of her guilt or innocence.

With this view, and without loss of time, a warrant was obtained, and under its authority a search was instituted, having for its object the discovery of that bottle in which the laudanum sold by the chemist had been contained, and of which so minute a description had been given.

And now, indeed, the case did begin to wear a sinister aspect, and great and serious alarm for Gabrielle's safety began to weigh upon her husband's heart. She was suspected of a crime. One step more, and she might be accused. The ministers of justice were on her track. What a thought it was that these men should have the right to come into the house, into her room even, to invade the sacred precincts of her bed-chamber, and that he, her husband, must stand by and allow it, must remain inactive while the household gods were subjected to desecration. Yet it was so. Resistance was useless, and worse than useless. It might aggravate the evil, it could not palliate it.

As for Gabrielle herself, she seemed for the time entirely crushed and paralysed by the horror of her situation. All force, all presence of mind had for the time deserted her. She seemed to herself, and looked to others, like one who lived and moved in a dream—a dream, and a most horrible one, and *from which she did not wake.*

It was piteous to see how she clung to her husband too, in the fulness of her misery, with a sort of mechanical feeling that he could save and help her. She followed him about. She dared not let him out of her sight. She held to his arm as if she dreaded lest they should take him from her. She looked up into his face for some sign of encouragement, some indication that he at least knew that there would soon be an awakening from the horrible dream. She stood outside the room door while the men were conducting the search within. Her husband was in there with them.

"What are they doing, Gilbert?" she asked, when presently he came out to speak to her, and comfort her.

Gilbert told her of their search, and what it was they looked for.

Sometimes it did almost seem as if her head had given way under the heavy pressure, and could now receive no distinct impression of anything. There were times when she no longer appeared to realise her danger, and yet other times, and these oftenest in the grey early morning, when it seemed to be borne in upon her with an almost exaggerated force, and an anguish that was unbearable. It was a horrible thing to wake to this, so horrible that sometimes the wildest schemes would come into her head in connexion with her situation.

She would at these times entreat her husband to fly with her before it was too late; "while there is time, while yet there is time," she would cry, "let us go. Far away, Gilbert dear, far from this dreadful place. We two could be so happy among the woods and rocks, away from wicked cruel men and women, happy and safe. Come, Gilbert, come, if we steal away now in the early morning, nobody will see us. I am afraid," she would say at such times, "I am afraid of that

woman. Take me away, take me away where I can never see her, Gilbert. Take me, if you love me."

And then, when her miserable husband, hardly more reasonable than herself, besought her to remember that to do such a thing would be to throw away their last chance, and that it would proclaim her to be guilty before all the world, then would she fall into a worse state still, and would cry out that he, too, was deserting her, that he believed her guilty, and that his love for her was gone.

Worst horror of all, but not, Heaven's mercy be thanked, of long continuance, ere long she would acknowledge the truth and justice of all that he said, and clinging round him once again, would entreat him that he would, at least, accord her this one favour, that if—if it came to the worst, he would in some way convey to her the means of death, that so she might die by his beloved hand. Such were some of the phases of affliction through which the suffering woman passed at this time.

On that critical day, when, in consequence of the discovery made at the chemist's, certain authorities came to search her room, she stood outside the door trembling in anticipation of some new horror. Her husband was inside with the men, but presently he came out to speak to her, and comfort her.

"What are they doing, Gilbert?" she asked, looking into his eyes for hope.

Gilbert told her of their search, and what it was they looked for.

"And have they found it?" she asked.

"Found—found what?"

"The bottle, Gilbert. Don't you remember, dear?"

"Remember," he repeated, mechanically. "No."

"Not remember. I got it to rub my poor shoulder—THE LAUDANUM."

Penmore uttered a cry of agony, as if in physical pain.

"Was there any left?" he gasped.

"Yes, about half."

"And what did you do with it?"

"I hid it. The chemist told me to keep it out the way of the servants. So I hid it."

"Oh, why did you do that?" cried Gilbert, who had remained for a moment stunned. "It will look worse than all the rest."

"I was so afraid lest some one should get hold of it," said Gabrielle, "and so there might be mischief done."

Again there was a silence. They were there on the landing outside the bedroom door. They could hear the men inside talking. They could hear them moving articles of furniture, opening and shutting drawers, and turning over everything that came in their way.

"Where did you hide it, Gabrielle?" said her husband, taking her hand, which was as cold as ice.

"In the box underneath the bed."

"Is it locked?"

"Yes, and I have got the key. I thought to keep it safe, Gilbert. You are not angry with me?"

"Angry? my poor darling. But you must give me the key."

"Oh, Gilbert."

"Yes, yes," he said, eagerly. "It is our only chance."

There was a pause in the movement that had been going on within the room, and then a dragging sound as of some object drawn heavily across the floor. The husband and wife looked each other in the face.

"The key, the key," said Gilbert again. Gabrielle took the bunch from her pocket, and with trembling hands divided *the key* from the rest.

"This is it," she whispered.

At that moment the door of the bedroom was opened from within, and one of the policemen appeared on the threshold.

"Here's a box here," the man said, respectfully enough, "which we should wish to be allowed to examine. If you could oblige us with the key."

Gilbert handed the man the bunch of keys just as he had received it from his wife—the key in question separated from the rest.

"You will find what you are looking for in that box," he said.

AT CARACAS.

THE hotel was a square house of two stories, close to the market-place, and not far from the centre of the city. All the rooms on the ground-floor were bedrooms. On the floor above was my apartment, a very large room divided into three by partitions, and overlooking the street. On the side opposite my room was another very large one, where the table d'hôte was held. To the left were three rooms occupied by the landlord and his family, and on the right were some more bedrooms for travellers. The concierge was a huge negro, who, having been a custom-house officer, gave himself all the airs of a government official, and had grown so fat that he quite blocked up the doorway. The landlord had come to the country as a savant, to collect articles for some museum, but, having married an English lady's-maid, condescended to allow her to make *his* fortune by keeping this hotel. He was the most silent man possible, and all the time I was there I never heard him say but two words, "Mon Dieu!" An unmarried daughter lived in the house, and played the piano at a great rate. The establishment consisted of two Indian waitresses, and a mulatto stable-boy. There was also a cook, so enormously fat that I put her down as the wife of the fat concierge. I was glad that I encountered her only once, and that at my departure, as I should never have been able to relish my dinner after seeing by whom it was cooked. I found my apartment very neatly furnished, and beautifully clean, and congratulated myself on having so comfortable a

lodging. That night I dined at C.'s, and was agreeably surprised at the elegance of his ménage. His house was but one story high, but there were many fine rooms in it. The drawing-room, for example, was about sixty feet long and twenty-five broad, and furnished like a first-class saloon in Paris. In the centre of the court, round which the rooms were built, was a garden full of beautiful flowers, and a fountain of clear water.

I have said I was well pleased with my apartment, and I ensconced myself in my mosquito curtains about midnight, anticipating a long and pleasant slumber. However, about half-past three, I woke in the midst of a dream, in which I fancied myself in a belfry, with the bells playing triple bob-majors. On my awaking, sure enough bells were ringing furiously all round. The sound seemed to come from every direction. What could it be? "Perhaps," thought I, "this is the way the Caráquenians announce a fire or an earthquake, or is it a popular émeute? Oh, bother them! I wish they would have their revolutions in the daytime, like reasonable people." Still the bells rang on, and presently there was a great noise of people passing in the street, and then a sound of firing and of rockets being let off. I should have gone to the window to reconnoitre, but a salutary awe of the mosquitoes and the penetrating fleas kept me where I was until the day dawned, when I got up to discover the reason of the hubbub. I then perceived that on the other side of the street there was a large convent, in which, although not a soul was to be seen, the bells were ringing in a way that reminded me of the Devil and the Old Woman of Berkeley. Further down the street than the convent was a small square, and on one side of it a church, where again the bells were ringing at least as obstreperously. In the direction of this church, which was brilliantly lighted up, there was quite a crowd of people coming and going, and from among them rockets shot up from time to time. On inquiry, I found it was the fiesta of the Isleños, or people from the Canary Islands, of whom there is quite a colony at Carácas. In South America, every one has his patron saint, and the Isleños have theirs, and in honour of their saint sleep was made to fly from the eyelids of all in the quarter of the city where I was, while our nerves were harassed throughout the day by a continued hubbub of bells, fireworks, processions, and bull-fights. But even fiestas must come to an end, and I found solace in the hope that quiet would at length be restored. Alas! the Catholic year at Carácas is made up of feasts and fasts, and, fasting or feasting, the inhabitants are for ever ringing bells, discharging holy squibs and rockets, and walking in tumultuous processions. I lived weeks amid this din, and never could get accustomed to it, nor enjoy that hearty sound slumber which Sancho apostrophises as the best of wrappers. But, in fairness, it must be added that fiestas have their attractions for strangers as well as their disagreeables. On these days, especially on notable holidays, such as that of Nuestra Señora de la Merced, the fair sex come forth in their gayest attire, and walk in bevies to the churches. It is then, if you are an impartial Paris, that you will resolve to bestow your golden apple on the Creole Venus in preference to all other beauties, so lovely are the faces that shine upon you from under the coquettish mantilla, and so graceful the figures that undulate along the streets. There may, indeed, be rosier cheeks and fairer skins elsewhere, but not such large black eyes, teeth of such dazzling whiteness, such taper waists, and faultless feet and ankles, as belong to the Venezuelan ladies. As for any devout feeling, that, of course, is entirely out of the question. The women come forth to be looked at, and the men stand in groups on the church steps, or cluster inside, to look at them. All round the churches are pictures, usually sad daubs, and a profusion of wax dolls, representing the Virgin, at various periods of her life. Anything more contrary to common sense, to say nothing of good taste and devotional feeling, than these images, it is impossible to conceive. Among the absurd groups of dolls I was particularly struck with one at the Merced fiesta, in which the Virgin, dressed in all the frippery imaginable, was kneeling beside a gigantic crucifix, while a six-year-old angel fluttered above the cross, dressed in silver-embroidered trunk-hose and tartan leggings of the royal Stuart pattern. About the middle of the day, when the heat is most trying, there is generally a procession, and the image or picture of the saint is carried about, amid a train of ecclesiastics, and with a body of soldiers as a guard of honour. Every now and then the host is elevated, and down go the people on their knees, and anon guns and rockets are discharged, and the use even of squibs and crackers is sanctified on such occasions.

On seeing all this, my recollection went back to India, and the processions of Durgá and Krishnah. Indeed, the yátrotsavahs of Hindustan, and the fiestas of South America, have a common origin. They are the resource of an idle people, and an excuse for putting on best clothes, loitering, gaming, and love-making. I was assured that at the grand fiesta at Santiago, the Virgin receives some thirty thousand letters from the girls of the city and its environs. Some ask for husbands and lovers, others for ball-dresses and pianos, and, incredible as it may appear, the petitions are answered, and, where it is thought politic, granted. As for such trifles as husbands and lovers, one knows from Herodotus that such matters are easily arranged, but even a piano is occasionally sent. At Carácas, absurdity is not carried so far, but even there fiestas are no doubt the busiest days at Cupid's post-office.

The site of Carácas is one to please an Oriental sovereign. It is at about the same elevation above the sea as Tehrán, the capital of Persia, and

resembles it in inaccessibility. With a few batteries judiciously placed, the approach to Carácas from the coast might be completely closed against an enemy, excepting, of course, English sailors, to whom all things are practicable that imply prize-money and a fight. In the beginning of June, 1595, the renowned Corsair Dracke, as the Spanish historians call him, or Francis Drake, stood in with his squadron towards the coast of Venezuela, till he arrived within about half a league from La Guaira, when he embarked five hundred men in boats, and landed. The inhabitants of La Guaira fled without resistance, and carried to Carácas the news of the terrible Englishman's descent on the coast. Then did the valiant alcaldes, Garci-Gonzalez and Francisco Rebolledo, assembling all the men who would and could bear arms, march out to repel and chastise the invader. They marched with banners displayed along the royal road leading from Carácas to La Guaira, leaving ambuscades in the less frequented passes of the mountains, where the thick trees and rough ground favoured such strategy. But Drake had found at Guaicamaento a Spaniard named Villalpando, who was willing to sell his country, and who led the corsair by an unfrequented route, perhaps that which is now called the Indian's Path, to Carácas. So, while the valiant alcaldes were marching down to the sea, and their gallant men in ambush were lying ensconced in the dank grass, the Englishman was hanging Villalpando, for whom he had no further use, on a tree, and packing up, with great care and very much at his ease, all the valuables he could find in Carácas. Now, who can adequately describe the fury of the alcaldes when they heard that, while they were guarding the stable-door, the steed had been already stolen! So they marched back again to the capital, resolved to make a pastel of Drake and his merry men, and hoping to catch them with their pikes and their hangers and their arquebuses laid aside, and their hands full of plunder. But Drake was cautious as well as bold, and had turned the municipal hall and the church near it into little fortresses, and the Spaniards had a presentiment that there was no taking these strong places without bloodshed, so they surrounded the city at a safe distance, and prepared to put every Englishman to death, who, not content with the booty he had already got, should go out to the villages round about to look for more. But one old hidalgo named Alonso Andrea de Ledesma, who was, perhaps, a native of La Mancha, mounted his steed, and put his lance in rest and an old target on his arm, and rode forth alone to drive out the English. The chivalry of the old don moved Drake's compassion, and he bade his men not to harm him; nor would they, had he not charged them at full speed, and tried to do mischief with his spear. Thereupon they killed him as gently as they could, and carried his body to a grave in the city, and interred it with all honour. So, when eight days were passed, Drake and his five hundred moved out of Carácas with their booty; and, after burning all the houses that they had not knocked down already, marched merrily away to their ships, and embarked without the loss of a single man.

Carácas is, as has been said, very inaccessible from the north—that is, from the side towards La Guaira and the sea; but, in the opposite direction, the slopes are easier. In order to form a correct notion of the site on which the city is built, one must keep in mind the direction of the mountain ranges of the country. The Andes alone run north and south, dividing South America like a backbone, but into two very unequal parts—the part parallel to the Pacific being infinitely narrow compared with the eastern portion that extends to the Atlantic. A number of cordilleras descend from the Andes, and run from west to east, and that cordillera which skirts the Caribean Sea forms quite an angle at La Guaira and Macuto, approaching there almost to the sea, and ending in a huge clump, the highest part of which is La Silla, a great double-peaked mountain, that towers up two miles to the east of Carácas. La Silla is, consequently, nearly opposite to Macuto, while the ridge which separates Carácas from La Guaira is called Cerro de Avila. This ridge appears to swell on without a break until it terminates in La Silla, but it is in reality separated from it by the deep ravine of Tocume. On the south side, then, of Avila and La Silla is a plain, called the plain of Chacao, with a steep slope from N. N. W. to S. S. E.—that is, from the mountains just mentioned to the La Guaira, a stream which flows with a south-easterly course into the Tuy. The latter river falls into the Caribean Sea, sixty miles to the east of the town of La Guaira. The plain of Chacao, which is a lateral branch of the far larger valley of the Tuy, is about ten miles long from west to east, and seven broad from north and south, and at its western extremity, where it is narrowest, stands Carácas.

Some authors have pronounced it to be matter of regret that Carácas was not built further to the east, near the village of Chacao, where the plain is widest. There is no doubt that Francisco Fajardo, who, in 1560, first built on the site which the capital of Venezuela now occupies, was led to choose the spot as being nearest to the coast, and also to the mines of Los Teques, which were the attractions that brought him into a locality then swarming with hostile Indians. In 1567, Don Diego Losada, who wished to make a permanent conquest where Fajardo had been little more than an explorer, founded a city on the site chosen by the latter, and called it Santiago de Leon de Carácas—thus giving it his own name Santiago, or Diego, the name of the Governor de Leon, and that of the Indians of the district, Carácas, which last alone survives. Losada, of course, little imagined that his new city would ever become the capital of a great country, and in selecting the site he

was probably guided by the accident that Fajardo had chosen it before him. In fact, if advantages of site were to decide the position of the capital, the government of Venezuela would be transferred from Carácas to Valencia, a city which has the richest soil and the best seaport in all South America. In the mean time, the Caraquénians are very proud of their native town, and boast much of its climate; but the question of its title to rank first among Venezuelan cities is decided in the negative by Humboldt, who says: "From the position of the provinces Carácas can never exert any powerful political influence over the countries of which it is the capital."

I soon came to know Carácas and its environs well, for fresh horses were lent me every day, and I rode somewhere or other every morning and evening. The horses of Venezuela, be it said, en passant, though spirited and well shaped, are so small that one would certainly snub them as ponies, but for their self-assertion and haughty little ways, which, it must be owned, are at times supported by worthy deeds in carrying their riders bravely into battle, and in aiding in the slaughter of furious bulls twice as big as themselves. They do not understand high jumping, but they go very well at ditches, however broad and deep. Their favourite pace is the pase-trote, a sort of quick amble, and they know very well that they are to go that way if the reins are held rather high, and the mouth is felt pretty strongly. Trotting is not fashionable, and, altogether, the English style of riding does not seem to be admired, for it is usual to say of a bad rider "he rides like an Englishman." The Creoles ride with excessively long stirrups, so as just to touch them with the toe, and the ambling pace of their horses is well suited for that kind of seat, as well as for the paved streets of Carácas, for neither rider nor animal is shaken by it.

My first ride was to the east of the city to Petaré, a large village about seven miles from Carácas. In a few minutes after leaving St. Amande's Hotel, I found myself in La Gran Plaza, the principal square, where the daily market is held. It is about the size of Portman-square, but looks larger, the buildings round it being all very low, except the Government House, which is on the western side, and the cathedral, which stands at the south-eastern angle. Both these buildings survived the great earthquake of 1812. I found nothing in the cathedral, either externally or internally, worth noticing, except the tomb of Bolivar, which is of white marble, and tastefully executed. The Liberator is represented standing in his general's uniform, and below are three female figures, intended, I suppose, for the three states who owe their freedom to him. The inscription is: "Simonis Bolivar cineres hic condit, honorat, grata et memor patria. 1852." Somehow, on looking at this monument, a certain sentence would recur to my mind: "He asked for bread, and they gave him a stone." Bolivar, whose ashes are here so honoured in the cathedral of his native town, died far away, starving, and an exile.

A little way from the cathedral is the theatre. Juxta-position seems to be the rule as regards these edifices in Venezuela. At La Guaira, the theatre stands next a church. Things have so far changed for the better since the time of Humboldt, that the theatre at Carácas, which was then open to the sky, is now roofed. During my stay there was no operatic troupe, and the pieces played were generally dull tragedies, in which all the characters were killed in succession, apparently to the great satisfaction of the audience.

At about half a mile from the cathedral, I came to a bridge over a stream which falls into the La Guaira, and which bounds the town on this side. Here are two fine coffee plantations, and a mile further is another still finer, notable for being the point at which Humboldt commenced his ascent of La Silla. The scenery here is very beautiful, the valley being a mass of cultivation, while from no point inland does the great mountain look so imposing. However, that which interested me most was the Ferro-Carril d'Este, or "Eastern Railway," the terminus of which is just beyond the bridge already mentioned. I dismounted to inspect the station, and as it was quite deserted, I was obliged to clamber over a gate fifteen feet high to get into it. I found that the rails had been laid down for about half a mile, but the grass and weeds were growing over them. There were engines and carriages, and piles of wood for sleepers, sad emblems of the slumber into which the whole concern has fallen, and from which it seems doubtful whether it will ever awake. I found the posada at Petaré full of people smoking and playing billiards, and the whole place had a more thriving, bustling appearance than I expected. There are about five hundred houses in the village, and some fine estates near it. Still there never could be sufficient traffic to repay the expense of a railway, unless the line were continued to Valencia.

My next expedition was to the north of the town, and to the slope beyond lying immediately under the Cerro d'Avila. The city of Carácas, as may be seen from this slope, is in figure a great square, with long parallel streets crossing it from north to south, and with the principal square of the market-place in the centre. But at the north-east angle there has been a suburb, through which the old road to La Guaira passes. The "Indian Path," already mentioned, branches off from that road. I was astonished to see the destruction that the great earthquake of 1812 caused in this direction. Not a house seems to have escaped, and though a few have been restored, the marks of the disaster are apparent everywhere, and whole lines of ruins still remain. In fact, the nearer the mountain, the greater seemed to me to have been the shock. I was confirmed in this opinion afterwards by the narra-

tive of an eye-witness, Major M., who still lives, and who was in official employment in Carácas when the earthquake happened. Major M. was writing in his office with his clerk at four P.M., on the 26th of March, in that year. It was intensely hot, and no rain had fallen for a considerable time. Being Holy Thursday, the churches were crowded with ladies, dressed in their gayest attire. The chapels of the convents were filled with nuns, and the streets, as is usual on holidays, with people who had come in from the neighbouring villages. At the barracks of San Carlos, a regiment of six hundred men were mustering under the walls. There was not a cloud in the sky, not a thought of danger in the heart of any one. All of a sudden the earth seemed to move upward, the church bells tolled, and a tremendous subterranean noise was heard. The perpendicular motion lasted four seconds, and was instantly succeeded by a violent undulatory movement, which continued six seconds more. In those ten seconds that great city, with fifty thousand inhabitants, had become a heap of blood-stained ruins. The churches of Alta Gracia and Trinidad, with towers one hundred and fifty feet high, were so completely levelled, that in their place only shapeless mounds remained, spread out to a great distance, but not more than five feet high. Every convent was destroyed, and of the inmates scarcely one escaped. The barrack of San Carlos was hurled forward from its base, and of the six hundred soldiers mustering below its walls not a man was left alive. At the first shock, Major M. started from his seat and rushed towards the door, followed by his clerk. M. sprang into the street, but his clerk was too late, and was crushed to death by the falling house. The major had seen many terrific sights in his long residence in these regions of the volcano and the earthquake, and had been in many battles both by sea and land, but he declared that the spectacle which Carácas presented at the moment of the great earthquake, was the most terrible of all. A vast cloud of dust rose up to heaven, and with it ascended the shrieks of more than twenty thousand human beings dying or wounded in the ruins. Great rocks came thundering down from the mountains, and at intervals explosions, like the discharge of innumerable pieces of artillery, were heard beneath the earth. Major M. fled down to the river La Guaira, and remained there without food till the next day. Even then it was difficult to procure the means of satisfying hunger, for the houses were all fallen, and the streets so encumbered with ruins, that it was difficult to pass. So for many days the sad sights were renewed of digging out the wounded and the dead.

Men's minds were so affected with terror, that for a long time they could not return to their ordinary occupations, but were continually absorbed with prayer and religious ceremonies. Then were many marriages performed between those who had for years been living together without that tie, and men who had defrauded others made restitution, appalled by the horrors of that tremendous day, and apprehensive of their recurrence.

At a few places in the Cerro d'Avila, I observed houses perched up at an elevation of several hundred feet, and among them one belonging to the Dutch minister. Below it is a country-house, called the Paraiso, once the property of an English minister, and which passed from him to a famous Creole beauty. But that which interested me most in this direction was the Catholic cemetery, said to be the finest in all South America, and well worth a visit. It stands on very high ground, and the view is magnificent. The singularity of the place is, that the inner side of the very high walls by which it is surrounded is lined with a sort of gigantic pigeon-holes. They are eight feet deep, and three feet wide and high, and are used as receptacles for coffins. Persons who can afford to pay a fee of thirty-five dollars are allowed the privilege of placing the coffin of a deceased relative in one of these receptacles for three years. The name of the deceased person is printed over the recess, and the coffin can be brought out at any time if required. Of course, it is thus preserved from destruction, being quite dry, and sheltered from the weather, and also safe from the attacks of insects, especially the formidable black ant, which is three-quarters of an inch in length, and devours everything it can get at. At the expiration of three years coffins are taken down, and the remains of the deceased person are, if the family wish it, handed over to them. Otherwise, they are thrown into a large pit, called a carnero. Poor people, and those who do not choose to pay for the three years' lodgment in the pigeon-holes, are buried at once in the grounds of the cemetery. I observed the words Calentura Amarilla in many of the epitaphs, which told plainly of the ravages of the yellow fever. Humboldt mentions that this disease had been known at La Guaira only two years before his arrival, and says nothing of its having appeared at Carácas.

After I had ridden past the cemetery a few hundred yards, I came to a mound about one hundred and fifty feet in length, and was told that this marked the spot where the persons who died in the great outbreak of cholera a few years ago, were buried. The victims were so numerous that it was quite impossible to inter them separately, so a very long deep trench was dug, and the dead were brought in carts and cast into it. The English burial-ground and the German are on the southern outskirts of the city, and are very poor places as compared with the Catholic cemetery. They are both covered with weeds, but, in the British burial-ground, the rank grass is so tall that it is impossible to see the graves, and the whole place is full of ant-hills several feet high. There is a chapel, with an inscription to say it was built

by Robert Ker Porter at his sole expense. I felt interested in seeing the name of a man who, like myself, had come from the Caspian Gates to this distant country of the West.

North of the city, I found only one other place worth a visit. This is the Toma, or reservoir, which supplies Carácas with water. It is situated in a thickly-wooded ravine, and a very narrow path among the bushes leads to it. It is necessary to tread with caution here, as, on account of the dense thickets, and the place being so little frequented, snakes abound in incredible numbers. I was assured that, on a little rocky terrace where the shrubs will not grow, sometimes forty or fifty rattlesnakes and other serpents might be seen basking in the sun. With such protectors a human guard might seem unnecessary. There is, however, a superintendent, and, on entering his cottage, I found his wife, a native of the Canary Islands, working with her daughter at making sandals. She said they could make two dozen a day, and got six and a half dollars, or about a pound sterling, a dozen. This is only one instance of many I saw of the enormously high rates at which labour is paid in Venezuela.

Westward of the city I did not ride. In this direction there is only the road to La Guaira, along which I had come by coach. I took, however, a walk to the Calvario, a hill on which the stations at Calvary ought to be marked by crosses, but I observed none. The hill, which being some hundred feet high, commands a good view over the city, is remarkable for a very severe action fought there on the 23rd of June, 1821, between Colonel Pereira, the Spanish commandant of Carácas, and General José Francisco Bermudez, of the patriot army. Bermudez, who had only fifteen hundred men, attacked with great fury the Spanish forces, though far outnumbering his column, and advantageously posted on the high ground, and was so completely defeated that he had great difficulty in escaping to Rodea with two hundred men.

To the south there is a fine road, made by an European engineer, which leads to Los Teques, a village about twenty-five miles from Carácas, where there were gold mines once worked by the Spaniards, and which, in fact, were the glittering bait that lured them into the province. The first station on this road, at about six miles from the city, is the pleasant village of Antemano, where Caraquénian beauties go to bathe and ruralise during the heats of summer. There is also a road more directly south, which leads across the river La Guaira into the hills, and so to the valley of the Tuy. There is a beautiful estate in this direction, belonging to Señor Espino, whose income from land may be about twenty thousand dollars a year. With a visit to his property I closed my survey of the environs of Carácas, and came to the conclusion that, were it not for earthquakes, epidemics, insect plagues, triennial revolutions, and bell-ringing, there would be few more desirable localities for a residence.

MORE SCOTCH NOTES.

The pretty little town of Banff, pleasantly situated on the sea, six hundred and odd miles north of London, and within sight, on a clear day, of John o'Groat's, is as desirable a residence for the autumnal holidays as is to be found in all Scotland. The town and its immediate vicinity afford all the delights which the health and pleasure-seeker can desire. For scenery, society, sea-breeze, sea-bathing, and sport of every kind, it is a multum in parvo. I have come to anchor here among shops, and banks, and places of business; yet I am within five minutes' walk of a park as large as the Regent's in London, and infinitely more picturesque. Every pleasure is within five minutes' walk—rowing or sailing in the lovely bay, trout and salmon fishing in the Deveron, pheasant, hare, and rabbit shooting (by permission of the Earl of Fife) in the woods and policies, bathing in the creeks on the links, harvesting in the fields, whose golden store almost encroaches upon the streets, Alpine climbing on the sides of Doon, with a view of fine countries from the top—what more would you have to give you an appetite for cock-a-leekie, and collops, and toddy, and "wut?" If Banff, with its bay, its river, and its surrounding scenery, were anywhere on the south or east coasts of England, it would be the gem of all watering-places, the paradise of pleasure-seekers. I don't say this because I was born within a few miles of it, and passed many of the happiest days of my youth in the town itself. No. I was insensible to its rare beauties then. It was when I came back to it after many years that the charms of the place struck me with their full force. Going back over the "bonny brig," I thought to myself, "Far ha' I travelled and muckle ha' I seen, But a bonnier little toon than this has never met my een." One *must* be poetical and lyrical on coming ower the bonny brig o' Banff. I defy even a Birmingham scissors-grinder to be otherwise.

Yet, with all these advantages, Banff is little frequented by strangers. The county people, insensible to the beauty which lies within an easy distance, go far afield in search of health and pleasure. Thus Banff, like full many a beautiful home flower, is born to blush unseen, and waste its sweetness on its natives, who are somewhat disposed to vote it a dull little hole.

Well, it *is* dull. In the principal street of the town I never saw ten persons at a time. One market-day there were eleven individuals visible in the neighbourhood of the Planetanes, but one of them was a horse and another a dog. If it had been crowds of people I wished to see, I should have stopped in London and taken daily walks down Fleet-street. Yet, at a week's end,

I am cured of my home-sickness for Fleet-street. I don't want to see Fleet-street or London any more; for the Cockney spirit has gone clean out of me, and I am once more a true Scot. When I shall have to tear myself away, I know I shall "greet" (most expressive Scotch word for weep, past tense "grat") like a laddie going back to school.

The influence of Scotch music is quite as powerful as the influence of Scotch whisky. It intoxicates, makes delirious. A dear old lady whom I love plays Scotch tunes to me, as few in Scotland can play them, and I am immediately possessed by a spirit of disloyalty towards the reigning House of Hanover. I want to put my foot on the table, flourish a claymour, and shout for Charlie; albeit I know in my heart—no, not my heart, my head—that Charlie was a poor weak washed-out Frenchified creature, who shivered in his kilt, and did not understand a word of Gaelic. Yet here am I indignantly demanding of the circumambient air, "Wha wadna fecht for Charlie? Wha wadna follow him, King of the Heelan-hearts, bonnie Prince Charlie?" And twenty times a day I am going "ower the water, and up the brae, and ower the water to Charlie." Toujours Charlie! Wonderful is the power of music and song, and see what music and song did for Charlie. They made him the idol of a people, their darling, their darling, the gay chevalier, when he was in reality a very indifferent young man. The events of the 'Forty-five offer a very remarkable illustration of the force of the saying, "Let me write the songs of my country, and I care not who makes the laws." Jacobite songs set all the laws at defiance, and very nearly set Charlie down in Geordie's chair. How lucky for Charlie and for us that it was only "very nearly!" If Charlie had got "his ain again," we might not now be thinking of him as all that was bonny and brave and chivalrous; and we might not now be boasting of our free institutions and enlightened times. As it is, we can afford to look back to him through a haze of sentiment, and regard him cheaply and pleasantly in the abstract. I can still read Lord Mahon's rose-coloured history, and believe in Charlie; nay, I can hope and wish against the happily accomplished fact, that he may win the battle of Culloden. It is highly honourable to the feelings of the Scottish people that, while there are none more loyal to the House of Hanover, they still keep a corner in their hearts for the beautiful idea which found its personification in Charles Stuart.

A quaint old custom is still preserved in this little town of Banff. Every morning at five o'clock the town-drummer parades the streets, and beats a réveillé—a reminder to the housemaids and 'prentice-boys that it is time to rise. An English drum says, "Rub-a-dub rub-a-dub rub-a-dub dub dub;" but a Scotch drum, speaking in its native language, says, "Peter-Dick Peter-Dick Peter-Dick peat-stack." These words had not been in my mind for more than twenty years; but they come back to me now in my sleep as the sound of the drum mingles with my dreams. The drum gives a new turn to my dreaming, and I am in great trouble about a proposition in Euclid, which I shall have to demonstrate next morning at school; and presently I hear dear old aunty's voice calling me to rise, and I awake to the sad remembrance that aunty's voice has been hushed in death many a year; that I have more difficult problems to solve than those of Euclid, and that I have to furnish my pockets with other things than peg-tops and marbles.

The great "sensations" of the day in this little town used to be the arrival and departure of the mail-coach; but the railway has run the coach off the road, and the only sensation is the Peter-Dick Peter-Dick Peter-Dick peat-stack of the town-drummer. All public announcements, advertisements, articles lost and found, are made by tuck of drum. When I want to know what is going on in the town, I open the window and listen to the drummer. And one thing I find to be always going on—Revivalism. Every evening of the week there is a meeting for religious exercises in the Masons' Hall, and Peter-Dick is instructed to inform us that "all classes are invited to attend." This is the only evening's entertainment which the town affords, and the pious inhabitants flock to the Masons' Hall, as sinful Londoners flock to the theatre. In my young days, wandering players visited the town and did very well; but players must not show their faces in Banff now. Nothing "profane" is tolerated, except music, and that must be Scotch.

I attended a revival meeting one Sunday evening, and I will relate briefly what I heard and saw. The appetite of the people for religious exercises seemed to be insatiable. Being in Banff, I did as Banff did, and went to church three times a day. We came out of the free kirk at eight o'clock in the evening, and immediately turned in to the St. Andrew's Hall to hear more preaching. I could not help the irreverent thought passing through my unchastened mind that we were all going upon the religious "drunk," rolling from one spiritual dram-shop to another. The hall filled very rapidly with the congregation of the free kirk, and in a quarter of an hour it was crammed to suffocation. A hymn was given out, and the people began to sing. Each verse began with:

O, revive us, O, revive us.

And they sang at least twenty verses, the fervour of the singers increasing with each verse, until the chorus became a wild savage scream. The heat, the oppressive atmosphere of the hall, and the impression, which I could not resist, that I was in the midst of a mob of maniacs, made me feel nervous and faint, and I was obliged to leave my seat and make my way to the door. If I had not done so, I am sure I should have fainted, which would probably have been taken to denote my conversion and revival. I feel justified in saying this, for on reaching the door, and peeping

into an ante-room, I saw that cold water and smelling-salts had been provided in anticipation of such manifestations; and attendants were in readiness to carry out those who might be prostrated by the influence of the "truth." The two young gentlemen who were announced to conduct the exercises did not arrive at the appointed time, and the people went on singing O, revive us, until they made their appearance. I was not a little astonished to find that one of them was the very young man who had read a portion of the service at the Episcopal chapel in the morning. The other young man was his brother, and I was informed that they were nephews of a laird. The exercises began with what was called "prayer;" but a stranger to the particular manner of supplication would have thought that it was a boisterous altercation with some one for whom the speaker had no great respect. Every sentence began with a prolonged "O—o—o," which sounded a good deal like the howl of a dog; and at regular intervals a gentleman in the body of the hall came in with a groan, like an obligato note on the trombone. (I am describing exactly what took place, without the slightest exaggeration.) After the prayer, the young man wiped his face and proceeded to preach. He was exceedingly voluble, and roared and bellowed at the top of his voice in a most frantic manner. I had no clear impression of what he said. There seemed to be no context connecting the dreadful words which he hurled at us. The whole discourse rang with such words as "sinners," "death," "damnation," "hell," "fire," and frantic appeals, repeated over and over again, to "come to Jee—sus." I could see clearly that the preacher was endeavouring to move his congregation, and produce manifestations. He tried every device. He raved, he stamped, he flung his arms in the air, he foamed at the mouth, he wept tears, and dried them with his pocket-handkerchief; he sobbed until he seemed to be choking. All this time the gentleman in the body of the hall was groaning louder and louder. A young woman bursts into tears, sobs, screams, faints, and is carried out. The attendants are ready with cold water and the smelling-bottle. "Death," "hell," "damnation." Another young woman carried out, and treatment applied on the top of the stairs in sight of the congregation. More dreadful words, and at every salvo women faint and fall from their seats. The attendants have now their hands full. The ante-room and the landing are crowded with the prostrate and insensible forms of young women. The stones are splashed with the reviving-water; the heavy atmosphere is pungent with the odour of ammonia. The attendants make an effort to take the young women out into the air, and, supporting them in their arms, carry them down stairs. Each young woman drops her Bible, and the books bound from step to step, burst from their bindings, and lie in fluttering masses of leaves on the floor below. And still the preacher roars on, redoubling his efforts to move the people—in other words, to frighten them into fits. When he has finished, he flings himself into a chair, covers his face with his hands, and appears to be in a paroxysm of excitement. And I do not doubt that he is quite as excited as his hearers.

I thought it was all over now, for the exercise had lasted for two hours, and it was ten o'clock. But I was mistaken. The other young man rose and began a second address, which (as I heard) was not concluded until eleven o'clock. I make no comment. I merely describe faithfully what I saw and heard. A laird was announced to conduct the exercises in the following week, and an earl the week after.

The Sabbath is very strictly kept in this quarter of Scotland. It is not considered lawful even to take a walk on the Sabbath-day, except to church. I made the circuit of this little town one Sunday afternoon, passing through all the principal streets, and I encountered only one person. The sun shone, the flowers exhaled their perfume, the birds sang upon the trees; but the face of man was hidden. I saw it here and there at a window, gloomily bent over a book.

But let us get Sunday over, and we are very jolly here. I think we get up earlier on Monday morning than on any other, and I fancy that we are more sprightly, and more given to rub our hands on this particular morning of the week. It may, possibly, be the reviving effect of the exercise of the day before. And here let me demur to a certain dictum of the late Mr. Buckle—that next to Spain, Scotland is the most priest-ridden country on the face of the earth. The language in which this is expressed, conveys the wrong idea. The result is the same, truly, but the fact is, that it is the priests, the clergy, who are overridden by the people. The active Church of Scotland is the Free Church (I grieve to say it), and the congregations choose their own ministers. These ministers are the servants of their people, and must preach to please their people, or they will be sent to the right-about. Nay, more, they must regulate their private lives to please their people. I have heard of ministers being taken to task by members of their congregations for wearing long hair, for drinking toddy, for playing the fiddle, for singing secular songs. The people of Scotland are not priest-ridden. They make the yoke for themselves, and they like it. The great religious power is wielded by the gentler sex. Woman is Pope. A strong-minded woman in a Scotch parish will make the minister shake in his shoes, and tremble for his bread.

I have remarked that the Scotch, at home in their native land, neglect many little opportunities of making money. Examples of this occur to me at every turn. I happen to have a farthing, which I brought with me from London, and I leave it on my table. The servant lassie takes it up and asks what it is. I say, a farthing. She has never seen a farthing before, and looks upon the coin as a curiosity. You would imagine that farthings would be in every-day use in canny

Scotland; that Scotland was just the place for farthing transactions. But no; you cannot even buy a farthing's worth of sweeties. The Scotch shopkeeper will recognise nothing less than the bawbee. Another example of the indifference of home-keeping Scots to petty transactions. I break a fishing-rod, and walk into a saddler's shop for a hank of waxed thread. The saddler puts aside the work upon which he is engaged, to prepare the thread. When he has finished it and hands me the thread, I ask, How much? "Oh, nothing," he says, "it's not worth mentioning; you're quite welcome." Now, I am very certain that an English saddler, who is not canny, and who is not fond of his bawbees, would make some charge, if it were only a halfpenny. I don't say that the Scot is indifferent to halfpence; but he has a strong feeling of pride, and loves to maintain his dignity. This honourable feeling animates even the very poor. I met a poor old man on the road one day, and asked him if he could accommodate me with a light for my cigar. He took out a flint and steel, and a bit of match-paper, and promptly complied with my request—and he did not beg for a "bit of bacca." There are beggars in Scotland, as elsewhere, but they are professional beggars. You will never find a person who is in work—though he may be in need of many things—holding out his hand for alms.

The independence of the Scotch poor, however, is not what it was. It has been assailed of late years by the introduction of the English poor-law, and I regret to hear has succumbed to the demoralising influence of that system. Before the poor-law was introduced, the poor of the parish were relieved from funds collected at the parish church. Every Sunday, at the close of the service, the "brod," as it is called (a money-box at the end of a stick), was pushed round, and every one contributed a halfpenny or a penny. The amount thus collected was not great; but it was found sufficient; for none but the aged, the decrepid, and the sick, would consent to accept aid from the "brod." In the majority of cases the recipients were old women, and the relief which they received was regarded as the voluntary alms of their more fortunate neighbours. At this time it would have been an everlasting disgrace to a young person to accept bawbees from the brod. But the moment parish relief was declared to be a right established by act of parliament, the old scruple began to wear off; and in a very short time young women who got into trouble, and young men who fell sick, or lost their employment, threw themselves upon the rates without shame or compunction. These are the words of a Scotch guardian of the poor: "The new poor-law has broken the spirit, and destroyed the independence of the lower classes of the Scottish people." Yet this poor-law was a necessity. The disruption of the Church drove more than half the people into a new fold, where the system was voluntary. The established churches lost half of their congregations, and the brod half its treasure of bawbees. It was necessary to call in the aid of law to make the seceders pay their share towards the support of the poor. And pauperism grew by what it fed on.

CHOLERA IN INDIA.

Although I am not a medical man, and not pretending to more knowledge of medicine than is necessary to prescribe a dose of effervescent magnesia to one of my children, few persons have seen more of Asiatic cholera. My first introduction to this fearful scourge I shall never forget. I had just arrived in the north-west provinces in India to join my first regiment. Although not in the presence of an enemy, the station where we were quartered was a new one, and we were still under canvas. Much to my delight, I found among the junior cornets of the corps a young fellow who had been with me at Westminster. When I arrived, he was absent on a month's leave, shooting in the jungles. He left word, however, with a brother-officer to look after my comfort, and I was asked to live with this gentleman until I could procure a tent for myself. This I did in a very few days, and, having engaged the requisite servants, began to feel myself quite at home. Early one morning, after I had been present for about a fortnight with the regiment, Johnsone came over at once to see me. He was a cheery, hearty young fellow; tall, of large make, and up to every kind of manly, healthy exercise. Between leaving school and entering the army, he had spent a year at Cambridge, where he had been in the first boat's crew and the crack eleven cricketers of the college. But his great passion was shooting, and to enjoy the sport of following large game, he had thrown up the prospect of being appointed to a regiment at home, and got himself gazetted to a corps serving in India. I shall never forget him as he sat by my bedside that morning—for I was not up when he arrived—and told me what glorious sport he had had, and how he had, with four other men, brought down, in the month he had been away, three royal tigers, two bears, four or five cheetahs, and "no end" of antelope and such-like small deer, besides having taken several "first spears" in hog hunting. Although he had only been a year with the regiment, Johnsone was a great favourite with all his brother-officers, as, indeed, a good-tempered, good-hearted young fellow, with plenty of courage, and a capital rider, is sure to be.

It was not the fashion amongst the officers of my regiment of Light Dragoons to indulge in tiffin. We took late breakfasts instead. The day that my friend arrived from his shooting trip, he insisted that I should come over to breakfast with him, both in order to talk over some mutual friends in England, and that he might introduce me to two of the party—one a young civil servant, the other an officer of a native infantry corps—who had been out in the jungle with him. We sat down eight to table, and, although per-

fectly temperate, a merrier party never assembled. About one o'clock we broke up, every one going to his respective employment or amusement. I remained an hour behind the rest, and smoked an extra cheroot with my old schoolfellow. He spoke of his mother and sisters far away in a pleasant rectory of Lincolnshire, and read me part of a letter he had that morning received from his father, the rector, who seemed to be, and justly so, very proud of his only boy. It is now twenty-five long years since I sat and smoked that cigar with my young friend, but I remember every incident of the hour as if it had been yesterday. I was a young man—a mere lad—just entering life, and how many milestones on the road through this world have I not passed since then? I remember how he broke off rather suddenly, saying he was very sleepy, and would like to take a snooze before evening stables. "Mind you sit next me to-night at mess, old fellow," were his parting words, "and I'll tell you all about how we killed the last boar."

I walked home to my own tent, and wishing as I went that the time would come when, being "dismissed" from riding-school and drill, I should be able to obtain leave of absence and go out on shooting expeditions as my friend Charlie Johnsone did. On reaching my tent, I pulled off coat and waistcoat and lay down, and, feeling very sleepy, told my servant not to let any one disturb me, but to be sure to call me when the first, or warning, trumpet for stables sounded.

About five o'clock I awoke, and was surprised to see that, instead of the ordinary frock-coat white overalls and forage-cap in which we went to stables every day, my full-dress was laid out on a couple of chairs, and my bâtman, or dragoon servant—himself being clad as if for parade in the scarlet bob-tailed coatee which in those days was our full dress—busy in the verandah polishing up my sword. "What's the matter, Wilson?" said I; "why have you got your full dress on?" "Oh, sir," he said, "there's a full dress parade at six o'clock, for Mr. Johnsone's funeral." I could hardly believe my ears. "Mr. Johnsone's funeral!" I exclaimed, half asleep and half stupified; "what do you mean?" "Oh, sir," replied the man, "poor Mr. Johnsone died this afternoon from cholera, and his funeral is ordered for six o'clock; here are the orders." As he said this, the orderly corporal of my troop brought me the order-book, in which I read: "The Lieutenant-Colonel Commanding regrets very much to announce the sudden death of Cornet Johnsone, which took place this afternoon from an attack of cholera. The regiment will parade in full-dress, with side-arms, at six o'clock, to escort the remains of this officer to the grave. A firing party of twenty-five men from F troop will parade, under command of Cornet Williams, at a quarter before six, and will be marched to the tent of the deceased officer."

To read the wording of the order distinctly was impossible, so utterly bewildered did I feel at this most unexpected occurrence. I had just time to dress and reach the parade-ground before the men fell into the ranks, and so had no time to speak to any of my brother-officers until the funeral was over.

It appeared that poor Johnsone had slept for about half an hour, then called his native servant and asked him to go for the doctor, as he felt very unwell. The servant saw at once what was the matter, and ran to the tent of the regimental surgeon, who in five minutes was by his patient's bedside. But although everything that could be done was tried—the surgeon had been many years in India, and had seen many hundred cases of cholera—nothing was of any avail, and in two hours this young man, in the pride of his strength, died in great agony. The heat being very great, and the body being in a terrible state immediately after death, the doctor recommended that it should be buried that evening, and his recommendation was attended to. Strange to say, there was not another case of cholera in our camp when poor Johnsone died, nor did one follow it. Upon inquiry, we found out that two or three nights previously, the poor fellow had been out in the jungles, slept in a village where there was a great deal of cholera, and that five persons had died of the scourge the very evening that he spent at their place. But he could not have slept in the house with any one that had cholera, for he had pitched his tent close to the village, and slept in it as usual. Indeed, it is most unusual in India for any European even to enter a native house, except in extraordinary circumstances, or when the owner happens to be a wealthy man, who makes a point of entertaining Englishmen. In the present instance, we could not trace in any way that Johnsone had any intercourse with, or had even so much as seen any native who was attacked with cholera, although at the village where he slept there certainly were several cases. But if he caught the infection, how was it that none of the others who were of the same party, and slept the same night at the same village, did not do so? There had been with him in the jungles three officers and one civilian; and what between kitmayars, bearers, masaulchies, beesties, baworchies, syces, grass-cutters, classies, shikarees, cootawallas, and others of the numerous kinds of servants without which respectable Englishmen in the Bengal Presidency are not supposed to move, there could not have been less than fifty people living in the little camp. Yet of these but one individual caught the cholera, and there was not another instance of it amongst poor Johnsone's companions, nor in our camp where he died. If he had been only seen by some doctor inexperienced in Indian maladies, it might have been thought that the medical man had mistaken his complaint, and that the poor fellow had swallowed poison.

My friend's sudden death had a very serious effect upon me. I spent a sleepless night after it, and next day was laid up with violent fever, which ended by going to my brain. I was sent to the Himalayas on sick leave, but it was only after a sea voyage round the Cape

to England, and a sojourn of some twelve months in my native air, that I was able to rejoin my regiment. From the day of poor Johnsone's death, until I was at the head-quarters of the corps and fit for duty once more, a period of nearly two years elapsed.

The next experience I had of Asiatic cholera occurred about three years after I had rejoined my regiment, and is so extraordinary that I almost hesitate to tell the story. I had been sent down from one of the far north-west stations of those days to Allahabad, there to take charge of some fifty recruits that had arrived for our regiment from England. They had landed at Calcutta, and had been marched up country to Allahabad, but the officer in charge of them was taken ill, and was ordered back to the Presidency by the medical men, I being sent to relieve him. I reached Allahabad, found everything ready, and started the following morning on our march up country. We got over the regular number of miles every day, and halted every Sunday according to general orders. The weather was cool enough to be agreeable, the two young officers that had come out from England with the recruits were gentlemanly lads, and a very agreeable man, a surgeon of the Company's service who was in medical charge of the party, made up a pleasant dinner-party of four every evening. There was no lack of game—antelope, wild-duck, teal, and partridges—either along the road, or so near that we could get some shooting every day. My order of march was as follows. The réveillé bugle sounded every morning at three A.M. The native cook-boys had strict orders to prepare before that hour a large copper of good strong coffee, so that each man should have his quarter of a pint before starting, and eat a piece of biscuit as he drank it. At four the second bugle sounded, the men fell in, the roll was called, and off we marched at once. For the first hour I always walked at the head of the small column, so as to see that the pace was not too quick, and kept up about three and a half miles an hour. At the end of each hour I halted for ten minutes, and as the marches along the great Trunk Road of the north-west provinces are very seldom more than twelve miles long, I managed always to get the men well under cover of their tents by eight o'clock. At the first halt I always had prepared for the men a drink, of which three-fourths was water, and one-fourth commissariat rum. This was to prevent their drinking the water at the roadside, which is generally most unwholesome. My arrangements proved so far good, that when we arrived at Cawnpore, which is thirty marches from Allahabad, we had only one sick man, and he was laid up with a severe strain. Not wanting the recruits to break loose and get drinking amongst the regiments stationed at Cawnpore, I did not halt there, but pushed on the day after our arrival. I was very anxious to bring the whole party to head-quarters without the loss of a single man, and had from previous experience learnt how very easily even the most healthy recruits become ill, and how very quickly they die on their way up the country. I thought of nothing, day or night, but how to prevent illness in my detachment. All that our doctor—a most sensible practical man, with twelve years' experience in the country—recommended I adopted, and for a long time everything went so well that I began to hope we would reach our destination without any serious sickness; but I was doomed to be disappointed.

It must have been four or five days after leaving Cawnpore, and somewhere about a third of the road between that station and Meerut, that the following extraordinary incident occurred. We made the usual halt at the end of the first hour, and whilst the cook-boys were mixing the grog for the men, some of the latter asked leave to go to a rising ground about twelve hundred yards off, to look at an European monument which was erected there, probably the spot where some unfortunate officer on his road up the country, had died and been buried. I gave the required leave, and some half dozen recruits started, laughing and joking with each other as they went along. When the ten minutes' halt was ended, I told the bugler to sound, so as to warn them we were about to start, and, as they did not come back, I desired him to repeat the call. He did so, but still the men did not come back. I took out my glass to see whether they were there, and saw them all sitting, or rather lying, down near the monument. The bugler sounded again, but they took no notice whatever of the call. One of them seemed to stagger to his feet, move a step or two, and then sit down again. Their conduct appeared so extraordinary, that I at once came to the conclusion that they had somehow or other got hold of liquor, and had drunk themselves stupid. Yet there was not a village, or even a house, anywhere within sight. I at once despatched a sergeant with men to see what was the matter, and a couple of litters or doolies to bring those who were too much intoxicated to walk. To my great astonishment, no sooner did the second party arrive near the monument, than they too sat down—sergeant, recruits, native dooley-bearers and all—and appeared incapable of moving, or at least of standing. I sounded the bugle again, but they made no sign whatever of coming. At last I could see with my glass one of the doolie-bearers making towards us. When he got near enough to speak, he bellowed out that every man that had gone up to the monument was lying sick, vomiting, and being purged. By this time we were all seriously alarmed for the poor fellows. The doctor wanted to go at once and see what was really the matter, but how to bring them back when the doolie-bearers appeared to be all sick, was the question. Fortunately, a party of palkee-bearers who had been carrying some travellers along the road, and were now returning to their own village, passed at this time. I stopped them, and an offer of four annas (sixpence sterling) to each of them to bring the men now round the monument

as far as the road, was at once accepted. They started off with me, the doctor remaining with the troops to make such arrangements as were possible for the men when we brought them back. On arriving at the monument we found every man there more or less ill, all vomiting, and all showing unmistakable signs of Asiatic cholera. I had hardly dismounted from my horse, when I felt a strong desire to retch, with violent pains about my stomach, and the peculiar sinking feeling which is a sure sign of cholera. Luckily I had with me a flask of brandy, I took a pull at it and felt better, although still unwell. The palkee-bearers at once, by my directions, seized each one a soldier, and carried them down to the rising ground, and then partly dragging, partly carrying them, got the men two or three hundred yards or so towards the road.

The whole affair did not occupy five minutes, from the time I arrived at the monument until the men were well on their way to join the detachment upon the road, and yet even in that short time several of the palkee-bearers complained of feeling ill, and showed unmistakable signs that they were so. To make a long story short, every one of the Europeans that visited the monument—about twelve in number, including myself—were seized with signs of Asiatic cholera, and of these five died before the next morning. Of the men that remained on the road, not one was seized. Those who recovered, did so very slowly, I for one remaining exceedingly ill and weak for some days. The eight native doolie-bearers were taken ill, but only two died. Of the palkee-bearers not one was seriously unwell, although all were slightly indisposed.

The third instance of my experiences in cholera vagaries, if I may be allowed the expression, happened in another English cavalry regiment, also stationed in India. I did not belong to the corps, but happened at the time to be on a visit to a friend, who was a captain in it. One Sunday night the men retired as usual to their barrack-rooms, and there was no more idea of cholera in the cantonment than there is to-day of the plague in London. On the Monday morning, I happened to get up and go out into the garden of my friend's house about half an hour after dawn. I heard some person passing along the road, and, looking up, saw the regimental sergeant-major walking very quickly, and with a face that showed plainly something very serious had happened. He went up to the adjutant's house, which was next to my friend's.

I could see that, after he had awoke one of the native servants, the adjutant himself came out in his dressing-gown, and spoke to the sergeant-major. In less than five minutes the two were on their way to the commanding officer's quarters, and ten minutes later I saw the hospital sergeant, with a note in his hand, go there also. I then called my friend, who was still asleep, and we went out together to inquire what was the matter. It turned out that during the night no less than thirty-eight men had been taken into hospital—all ill with the most violent form of Asiatic cholera, and of these six were already dead. The most extraordinary part of the story is, that all the men taken ill had come from two of the barrack-rooms—of which there were sixteen in the lines—and in no other room had there been a single case of sickness.

As might naturally be expected, the colonel and most of the officers were very soon at the hospital ward where the poor fellows were lying ill with cholera. As the morning wore on, about a dozen more men, all from the same rooms, were taken ill, whilst of those already in hospital four or five died. Towards noon there was but one fresh case; but before sunset two more deaths happened. After that there was a slight improvement in those already ill, and, although two more deaths took place the next day, the scourge seemed stopped for the time. On the third day there was one fresh case, but no deaths, and from that time the cholera began to disappear. Many of those that had been taken ill were a long time before they recovered altogether, and some had eventually to be sent home. But the cholera did not attack another man, and, as I learned afterwards, for the next two years there was not a single case of it in the cantonment.

It appeared as if the destroying angel had descended upon the barracks for one night, and had cut off the inhabitants of these two rooms, and no others. From the Sunday night until the Wednesday morning, there were altogether fifty-two men taken ill with cholera, and of these fifteen or sixteen died. The cholera was of the most decided Asiatic kind, the patients turning blue almost immediately after they were taken ill, and writhing in the most intense agony. The strongest men seemed to be the most certain victims to the scourge, and those that recovered were mostly sickly-looking young fellows. As might have been expected, the panic among the men was very great so long as the sickness lasted. But a week after it had disappeared no one seemed to remember its advent.

The two barrack-rooms in which all the cases occurred, were of course emptied out, and the men lodged elsewhere for a time. The rooms were thoroughly investigated by engineers as well as by a medical commission, but nothing in or near them could be found that would in any way account for this fearful visitation. The drainage was certainly bad—or rather, as in the days I speak of, there was no drainage at all about any barracks in India—but it was no worse than that of the other fourteen barrack-rooms. To make it still more singular, the two barrack-rooms where the cholera broke out were situated in the very middle of the lines, and were not subject any more or less than the neighbouring buildings to the influence of any particular wind.

One more instance of the extraordinary freaks of cholera which I have witnessed in India, and I have done. A brother of mine, then belong-

ing to the Bengal Civil Service, but since dead, was taken very ill with jungle fever in the north-west, and was recommended to proceed down the Indus, and so, viâ Kurrachie and Bombay, to England. I obtained leave to accompany him to the western presidency, and see him safe on board the steamer for Suez. But by the time we arrived in Bombay he felt so much better, that he resolved not to lose his Indian allowances by going home, but to try whether he could not restore himself to health by a sea voyage to China. I wrote to my regiment, and obtained leave again to go on with him to Singapore, where, if better, he would proceed on to Hong-Kong, and I would return to Calcutta. If not recovered, he was to go round with me to the City of Palaces, and there take a passage round the Cape to Europe, as the medical men in Bombay appeared all of opinion that nothing would do him so much good as a long sea voyage. We left Bombay in a sailing vessel, an opium clipper belonging to one of the great Parsee firms. There were four or five other passengers on board, and among them a young officer who had lately exchanged from one of her Majesty's regiments in Bombay to another corps in Australia, and was on his way to China, where he hoped to find some vessel bound to Melbourne. Our ship was a very comfortable vessel, well found in everything, but all the way down the coast we had the most extraordinary light winds, and often calms, which made the voyage extremely tedious. We had been just a fortnight at sea, were out of sight of land, had not touched anywhere, nor had we communicated with any other ship, when the young officer of whom I have spoken was one night taken extremely ill, and the two medical men we had on board—one being the surgeon of the ship, the other a doctor belonging to the Madras army—at once declared him to be suffering from a very bad attack of Asiatic cholera. He lived about twenty-four hours, and then died from exhaustion. The doctors did all they could for him, but almost from the very first his case was declared by them both to be hopeless. It may be easily imagined that even the most courageous amongst us were not a little frightened at what had happened, and fully expected that others would fall victims to the same complaint. The crew of the vessel consisted of native Lascars, the captain and chief officer only being Englishmen, as is usual in ships employed on what is called "the country trade." The day after the young Englishman died, three Lascars were taken ill; of these, one died and two recovered. After that, we had not a single case in the ship, and everybody on board enjoyed the most perfect health until we arrived at our destination some three weeks later.

Whilst relating these anecdotes, I have purposely omitted putting forward any theory of my own as to whether the cholera is infectious, or contagious, or both, or neither. In fact, I have no theory to put forth. What I have told in this paper are simply facts that happened in my presence, so to speak, during a prolonged service in the East, and which would almost lead to the conclusion that even of what we call Asiatic cholera there is more than one kind, and that the complaint may be brought on sometimes quite irrespective of bad drainage, dirty dwellings, or unhealthy food. But, as I said when I began this paper, I am not a medical man, and I leave others to draw their inferences from the instances I have related.

HALF A MILLION OF MONEY.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "BARBARA'S HISTORY."

CHAPTER LXXIX. O BELLA ETA DELL' ORO!

Careworn and intent, his lips pressed nervously together, his brow contracted, his eyes, hand, and pen, all travelling swiftly in concert, William Trefalden bent over his desk, working against time, against danger, against fate. All that day long, and half the night before, he had been sitting in the same place, labouring at the same task, and his work was now drawing to a close. Piles of letters, papers, memoranda, deeds, and account-books crowded the table. A waste-paper basket, full to overflowing, was placed to the left of Mr. Trefalden's chair, and a large cash-box to the right of his desk. Although it was only the fifteenth of September, and the warm evening sunlight was pouring in through the open window, a fire burned in the grate. The fragments clinging to the bars and the charred tinder-heap below, indicated plainly enough for what purpose that fire had been kindled.

The sun sank lower and lower. The sullen roar of the great thoroughfare rose and fell, and never ceased. The drowsy City clocks, roused up for a few moments and grown suddenly garrulous, chimed the quarters every now and then, and, having discharged that duty, dozed off again directly. Then the last glow faded from the house-tops, and the pleasant twilight—pleasant even in City streets and stifling offices—came gently over all.

Still Mr. Trefalden worked on; his eager pen now flying over the page, now arrested at the base of a column of figures, now laid aside for several minutes at a time. Methodically, resolutely, rapidly, the lawyer pursued his task; and it was a task both multifarious and complicated, demanding all the patience of which he was master, and taxing his memory to the uttermost. He had told his clerks that he was going out of town for six weeks, and was putting his papers in order before starting; but it was not so. He was going away, far away, never to set foot in that office again. He was turning his back upon London, upon England, upon his cousin Saxon, for ever and ever.

He had intended to do this weeks before. His plans had been all matured long enough in advance. He was to have been in Madeira, perhaps many an ocean-league further still, by this

time; but fate had gone against him, and here, on the fifteenth of September, he was yet in London.

Mrs. Rivière was dead. They had believed her to be gaining strength at Sydenham, and she had seemed to be so much better, that the very day was fixed for their journey to Liverpool, when, having committed some trifling imprudence, she caught a severe cold, fell dangerously ill, and, after lingering some three or four weeks, died passively in her sleep, like a sick child. This event it was that delayed William Trefalden in his flight. He chafed, he wearied, he burned to be gone—but in vain; for he loved Helen Rivière—loved her with all the depth and passion that were in him, and, so loving her, could no more have left her in her extremity of grief and apprehension than he could have saved her mother from the grave. So he waited and waited on, week after week, till Mrs. Rivière was one day laid to rest in a sheltered corner of Norwood Cemetery. By this time September had come, and he well knew that there was danger for him in every rising of the sun. He knew that Saxon might come back, that the storm might burst and overwhelm him, at any moment. So he hurried on his final preparations with feverish haste, and thus, on the evening of the fifteenth, was winding up his accounts, ready to take flight on the morrow.

Now he untied a bundle of documents, and, having glanced rapidly at their endorsements, consigned them, unread, to the waste-paper basket. Now he opened a packet of letters, which he immediately tore up into countless fragments, thrust into the heart of the dull fire, and watched as they burned away. Deeds, copies of deeds, accounts, letters, returned cheques, and miscellaneous papers of every description, were thus disposed of in quick succession, some being given to the flames, and some to the basket. At length, when table and safe were both thoroughly cleared, and the twilight had deepened into dusk, Mr. Trefalden lit his office-lamp, refreshed himself with a draught of cold water, and sat down once more to his desk.

This time he had other and pleasanter work on hand.

He drew the cash-box towards him, plunged his hands into it with a sort of eager triumph, and ranged its contents before him on the table. Those contents were of various kinds—paper, gold, and precious stones. Paper of various colours and various qualities, thick, thin, semi-transparent, bluish, yellowish, and white; gold in rouleaux; and precious stones in tiny canvas bags, tied at the mouth with red tape. Money—all money; or that which was equivalent to money!

For a moment, William Trefalden leaned back in his chair and surveyed his treasure. It was a great fortune, a splendid fortune, a fortune carried off, as it were, at the sword's point. He had his own audacity, his own matchless skill to thank for every farthing of it. There it lay, two millions of money!

He smiled. Was his satisfaction troubled by no shadow of remorse? Not in the least. If some fresh lines had shown themselves of late about his mouth and brow, it may be safely assumed that they were summoned there by no "compunctious visitings." If William Trefalden looked anxious, it was because he felt the trembling of the mine beneath his feet, and knew that his danger grew more imminent with the delay of every hour. If William Trefalden cherished a regret, it was not because he had robbed his cousin of so much, but rather that he had not taken more.

Two millions of money! Pshaw! Why not three? Why not four? Two millions were barely his own rightful share of the Trefalden legacy. Had not Saxon inherited four million seven hundred and seventy-six thousand pounds, and in simple fairness should not he, William Trefalden, have secured at least another three hundred and eighty-eight thousand for himself?

There was one moment when he might have had it—one moment when, by the utterance of a word, he might have swept all, *all*, into his own hands! That moment was when Saxon gave him the power of attorney in the library of Castletowers. He remembered that his cousin had even proposed with his own lips to double the amount of the investment. Fool! over-cautious, apprehensive fool that he had been to refuse it. He had absolutely not *dared* at the moment to grasp at the whole of the golden prize. He had dreaded lest the young man should not keep the secret faithfully; lest suspicion might be awakened among those through whose hands the money must pass; lest something should happen, something be said, something be done to bring about discovery. So, fearing to risk too much, he had let the glorious chance slip through his fingers, and now, when he might have realised all, he had to be content with less than half!

Well, even so, had he not achieved the possession of two millions? As he thought thus, as he contemplated the wealth before his eyes, he saw before him, not mere gold and paper, but a dazzling vision of freedom, luxury, and love. His thoughts traversed the Atlantic, and there—in a new world, among a new people—he saw himself dwelling in a gorgeous home; rich in lands, equipages, books, pictures, slaves; adored by the woman whom he loved, and surrounded by all that makes life beautiful. Nor did he omit from this picture the respect of his fellow-citizens, or the affection of his dependents. The man meant to live honestly in that magnificent future; nay, would have preferred to win his two millions honestly, if he could. He had too fine a taste, too keen a sense of what was agreeable, not to appreciate to its fullest extent the luxury of respectability. William Trefalden liked a clean conscience as he liked a clean shirt, because it was both comfortable and gentlemanly, and suited his notions of refinement. So he fully intended to sin no

more, but to cultivate all manner of public and private virtues, and die at last in the odour of popularity.

This delicious dream flashed through his mind in less time than it occupies in the recital. Hopes, regrets, anticipations, followed each other so swiftly, that the smile with which his reverie began had scarcely faded from his lips, when he again took up his pen and proceeded to note down in their order the particulars of his wealth.

For months past he had been quietly and cautiously disposing of this money, not selling out the whole two millions at once, but taking it a little at a time, placing some here, some there, and transferring the greater portion of it, under his assumed name of Forsyth, to foreign securities.

One by one he now examined each packet of notes and shares, each rouleau of gold, each bag of precious stones; returned each to the cash-box; and entered a memorandum of its nature and value in the pages of his private account-book. This account-book was a tiny little volume, fitted with a patent lock, and small enough to go into the waistcoat-pocket. Had he lost it, the finder thereof would have profited little by its contents, for the whole was written in a cunning cypher of William Trefalden's own invention.

English bank-notes to the value of thousands and tens of thousands of pounds; notes of the Banque de France for tens of thousands and hundreds of thousands of francs; American notes for tens of thousands and hundreds of thousands of dollars; Austrian notes, Russian notes, Belgian and Dutch notes, notes issued by many governments and of the highest denominations; certificates of government stock in all the chief capitals of Europe; shares in great Indian and European railways; in steam navigation companies, insurance companies, gas companies, docks, mines, and banks in all parts of the civilised world—in India, in Egypt, in Rio Janeiro, in Ceylon, in Canada, in New Zealand, in the Mauritius, in Jamaica, in Van Diemen's Land; rouleaux of English sovereigns, of Napoleons, of Friedrichs d'or; tiny bags of diamonds and rubies, each a dowry for a princess—money, money, money, in a thousand channels, in a thousand forms—there it lay, palpable to the eye and the touch; there it lay, and he entered it in his book, packed it away in his cash-box, and told it over to the uttermost farthing.

He alone knew the care, the anxious thought, the wearisome precautions that those investments had cost him. He alone knew how difficult it had been to choose the safe and avoid the doubtful; to be perpetually buying, first in this quarter, then in that, without attracting undue attention in the money market; to transact with his own unaided hand all the work connected with those purchases, and yet so to transact it that not even his own clerks should suspect how he was employed.

However, it was all over now—literally all over, when, at half-past nine o'clock in the evening, he at length turned the key upon the last rouleau, and noted down the last sum in his account-book.

Then he took a deed-box from the shelf above the door, locked the cash-box inside, and put the key in his pocket. That deed-box was inscribed in white letters with the name of a former client—a client long since dead, called "Mr. Forsyth."

Having done this, he placed both in a large carpet-bag lined throughout with strong leather, and fitted with a curious and complicated padlock—a bag which he had had made for this express purpose weeks and weeks back. Last of all, having strapped and locked the bag; locked the empty safe; stirred the ashes beneath the grate, to see if any unburned fragments yet remained; cast a farewell glance round the room in which so many hours of his life had been spent; put out his lamp, and put on his hat, William Trefalden took up the precious carpet-bag, and left the place, as he believed, for ever.

But it was not for ever. It was not even for ten minutes; for behold, when he had gone down the gloomy staircase and unlatched the house door at the end of the passage opening upon the street, he found himself face to face with a tall young man whose hand was at that very moment uplifted to ring the housekeeper's bell—a tall young man who stood between him and the lamplight and barred the way, exclaiming:

"Not so fast, if you please, cousin William. I must trouble you to turn back again, if you please. I have something to say to you."

CHAPTER LXXX. FACE TO FACE.

Olimpia's fortitude broke down utterly when all was over. She neither sobbed, nor raved, nor gave expression to her woe as women are wont to do; but she seemed suddenly to loose her hold upon life and become lost in measureless despair. She neither spoke nor slept, hungered nor thirsted; but remained, hour after hour, pale, motionless, speechless as the one for whom she mourned. From this apathy she was by-and-by roused to the sharp agony of a last, inevitable parting. This was when her father's corpse was removed at Civita Vecchia, and Lord Castletowers left them in order to attend the poor remains to their last resting-place in Rome; but this trial over, and her disguise exchanged for mourning robes befitting her sorrow and her sex, Miss Colonna relapsed into her former lethargy, and passively accepted such advice as those about her had to offer. The yacht then went on to Nice, where, in accordance with Saxon's suggestion, Olimpia was to await the Earl's return.

It is unnecessary to say that Saxon cast anchor in vain in the picturesque port of that pleasant town. In vain he called upon the English consul; in vain applied to the chief of police, to the postal authorities, to every official personage

from whom he conceived it possible to procure the information of which he was in search. The name of Rivière had not been heard in the place.

He examined the visitors' list for the last three months, but found no record of their arrival. He inquired at the bank with the same unsatisfactory result. It was the slack season, too, at Nice—the season when visitors are few, and every stranger is known by name and sight—and yet no ladies answering in any way to his description had been seen there that summer.

Having spent the best part of a day in the prosecution of this hopeless quest, Saxon was forced at last to conclude that Mrs. and Miss Rivière were not merely undiscoverable in Nice, but that they had never been to Nice at all.

And now, he asked himself, what was to be done? To leave Miss Colonna among strangers was impossible. To remain with her at Nice was, for himself, equally impossible. However, Olimpia cut the knot of this difficulty by announcing her desire to be taken at once to England. She had friends in London, dear and tried friends, who had laboured with her in the Italian cause for many years, among whom she would now find tender sympathy. She expressed no wish to go to Castletowers, as she would surely have done a few months before; and Saxon, knowing the cause of her silence, dared not propose it to her.

So, having written a hasty line to Lord Castletowers, informing him of their change of plans, Saxon despatched his yacht to Portsmouth, bade farewell to Montecuculi, who was now hastening back to south Italy, and conducted Miss Colonna back through France as fast as the fastest trains could take them. On the fifteenth of September, at four o'clock in the afternoon, they landed at Dover. By eight o'clock that same evening, the young man had conducted the lady to the house of a friend at Chiswick, and, having despatched a hasty dinner at his club, posted down to the City—not so much with any expectation of finding his cousin at the office, as in the hope of learning something of his whereabouts. What he actually anticipated was to hear that the lawyer had disappeared long since, and was gone no one knew whither.

He was therefore almost as much startled as the lawyer himself, when the door opened, as it were, under his hand, and he found himself standing face to face with William Trefalden.

"This is indeed a surprise, Saxon," said Mr. Trefalden, as they withdrew into the passage.

"I fear, not an agreeable one, cousin William," replied the young man, sternly.

But the lawyer had already surveyed his position, and chosen his line of defence. If, for a moment, his heart failed within him, he betrayed no sign of confusion. Quick to think, prompt to act, keenly sensible that his one hope lay in his own desperate wits, he became at once master of the situation.

"Nay," he replied, quite easily and pleasantly, "how should it be other than agreeable to welcome you back after three months' absence? I scarcely expected, however, to see you quite so soon. Why did you not write to tell me you were coming?"

But to this question, Saxon, following his cousin up the staircase, made no reply.

Mr. Trefalden unlocked his office door, lit his office lamp, and led the way into his private room.

"And now, Saxon," said he, "sit down, and tell me all about Norway."

But Saxon folded his arms, and remained standing.

"I have nothing to tell you about Norway," he replied. "I have not been to Norway."

"Not been to Norway? Where then have you been, my dear fellow?"

"To Italy—to the East."

He looked hard at his cousin's face as he said this; but Mr. Trefalden only elevated his eyebrows the very least in the world, seated himself carelessly in his accustomed chair, and replied:

"A change of programme, indeed! What caused you to give up the North?"

"Chance. Perhaps fate."

The lawyer smiled.

"My dear Saxon," he said, "you have grown quite oracular in your style of conversation. But why do you not sit down?"

"Because you and I are friends no longer," replied the young man; "because you have betrayed the trust I placed in you, and the friendship I gave you; because you have wronged me, lied to me, robbed me; because you are a felon, and I am an honest man!"

Mr. Trefalden turned livid with rage, and grasped the arm of his chair so fiercely that the veins swelled upon his hand, and the knuckles stood out white beneath the skin.

"Have you reflected, Saxon Trefalden," he said, in a deep, suppressed voice, "that this is such language as no one man can forgive from another?"

"Forgive!" echoed Saxon, indignantly. "Do *you* talk to *me* of forgiveness? Do you understand that I know all—all? All your treachery, all your baseness! I know that your Overland Company is a lie. I know there are neither directors nor shares, engineers nor works. I know that the whole scheme was simply a gigantic fraud devised by yourself for your own iniquitous ends!"

The lawyer bit his lips, and his eye glittered dangerously; but he kept his passion down, and replied, with forced calmness:

"You know, I presume, that the New Overland Route scheme was a bubble. I could have told you that. I could also have told you that I have not the honour to be the contriver of that bubble. On the contrary, I am one of its victims."

Saxon looked at him with bitter incredulity; but he went on:

"As for your money, it is all safe—or nearly all. You have lost about sixteen thousand pounds by the transaction—I, as many hundreds."

"If it were not that I can scarcely conceive of so much infamy as would be implied in the doubt," said Saxon, "I should say that I do not believe one word of what you tell me!"

"You will repent this," said Mr. Trefalden, grinding the words out slowly between his teeth. "You will repent this from your very soul!"

Saxon put his hand to his brow, and pushed back his hair in an impatient, bewildered way.

"If I only knew what to believe!" he exclaimed, passionately.

Mr. Trefalden looked at his watch.

"If you will have the goodness to come here to-morrow at twelve," he said, "I will send one of my clerks with you to the Bank of England, to satisfy you of the safety of your money. In the mean while, I do not see that anything is gained by a conversation which, on one side, at least, consists of mere vituperation. Have you anything more to say to me?"

"Yes. Where are Mrs. and Miss Rivière?"

"Mrs. Rivière is dead. Miss Rivière has returned to Florence."

"You told me they were at Nice."

"I believed it when I told you so, but I was mistaken."

"One more question, if you please. What have you done with the twenty-five thousand pounds due to Mr. Behrens?"

The lawyer rose haughtily from his seat.

"What do you mean?" he said.

"Simply this—what have you done with the twenty-five thousand pounds placed in your hands by Lord Castletowers two years ago, for the payment of Mr. Behrens' claim?"

"This, I presume, is meant for another insult?" said Mr. Trefalden. "I decline to reply to it."

"You had better reply to it," cried the young man, earnestly. "For your own sake, I counsel you to reply to it. To-morrow will be too late."

The lawyer took a card from the mantelshelf, and flung it disdainfully upon the table.

"There is Mr. Behrens' card," he said. "Go yourself to him to-morrow, and ask whether his mortgage has been paid off or not."

Saxon snatched up the card, and read—"Oliver Behrens, *Woolstapler*, 70, *Bread-street, E.C.*"

"God forgive you, if you are again deceiving me, William!" he said.

But Mr. Trefalden only pointed to the open door.

"Whatever more you may have to say to me," he replied, "I will hear to-morrow."

Saxon lingered for a moment on the threshold, still looking earnestly, almost imploringly, in the lawyer's face. Then, once more saying "God forgive you, if you are deceiving me!" he turned away, and went slowly down the stairs.

CHAPTER LXXXI. HOW MR. KECKWITCH PASSED THE SUMMER HOURS.

Returning to his chambers weary and anxious, Saxon was not particularly delighted to find his dear friend, Mr. Laurence Greatorex, in possession of a sofa, making himself thoroughly at home with a newspaper, a cup of coffee, and a cigarette. Somewhat over-demonstrative at the best of times, the banker's greetings were more than commonly oppressive on this occasion.

"I happened to drop into the club," he said, "and, hearing that you had been seen there to-day, I wouldn't lose an hour in coming to see you, my dear boy—not an hour!"

And then he shook hands with Saxon for the twentieth time, and again protested that he was never so glad to see any one in his life—never, by Jove!

"But you don't look much the better for your Norwegian trip," he added.

"I suppose I am tired," replied Saxon, with a glance at the timepiece. "I have been travelling incessantly for some days."

"I hope you are not too tired to hear something that I have to tell you," said the banker.

"What is it about?"

"Well, it's about your precious cousin in Chancery-lane."

Saxon shook his head impatiently.

"Oh, Mr. Greatorex," he said, "that will wait till to-morrow."

"I am not so sure that it will. I am not sure, Trefalden, that you have come one day too soon."

"If you mean that the new company is all a bubble," said Saxon, gloomily, "I know it already."

"You do?"

Saxon nodded.

"Lost money by it?"

"Yes; some."

"All that Mr. Trefalden undertook to invest for you?"

"No; less than one hundredth part of it. Only sixteen thousand pounds."

"Less than one hundredth part of it!" repeated the banker. "By all the powers, then, you had entrusted him with something like two millions of money!"

"Just two millions."

"What has become of the remaining nineteen hundred and eighty-four thousand pounds?"

"It is re-invested, I presume, in government stock."

"You presume? What do you mean by saying you 'presume?' Who told you so?"

"My cousin himself, not an hour ago. He said he would send one of his clerks with me to-morrow to the Bank of England, that I might satisfy myself as to the safety of my money."

Mr. Greatorex got up and took three or four turns about the room, thinking profoundly.

"Did he tell you he was going shortly out of town?"

"No."

"And you took him by surprise, did you not?"

"Quite by surprise."

"Humph! Made an appointment with you for to-morrow?"

"Yes."

"Where?"

"At his office."

"What hour?"

"Twelve."

Mr. Greatorex struck the table sharply with his open hand.

"Then he won't keep it!" exclaimed he. "I'd stake my head that he won't keep it!"

Saxon, leaning his head moodily upon his hands, was of the same opinion.

"Now, look here Trefalden," said the banker, excitedly, "I have had my suspicions of your cousin all along. You know that; but some queer things have come to my ears of late. Do you know where he lives?"

"No."

"I do. Do you know *how* he lives?"

"Not in the least."

"I do."

"How did you come by your knowledge?"

"By means of his own head clerk—a fat fellow with a wheezy voice, and a face like an over-boiled apple-pudding."

"I know the man—Mr. Keckwitch."

"The same. And now, if you will just listen to me for five minutes, I'll tell you the whole story from beginning to end."

And with this, Mr. Greatorex related all about his interview with the lawyer, telling how William Trefalden had faltered and changed colour at the first mention of the new Company; how speciously he had explained away Saxon's statement regarding the investment; and how, at the close of the interview, the banker found that he had not really advanced one step towards the corroboration of his doubts. About a week or ten days, however, after this interview, Mr. Abel Keckwitch presented himself in Lombard-street, and, with an infinite deal of cautious circumlocution, gave Laurence Greatorex to understand that he would be willing to co-operate with him to any safe extent, against William Trefalden. Then came a string of strange disclosures. Then, for the first time, the banker learned the mystery of the lawyer's private life. A long course of secret and profuse expenditure, of debt, of pleasure, of reckless self-indulgence, was laid open to his astonished eyes. The history of the fair but frail Madame Duvernay, and every detail of the ménage of Elton House, down to the annual sum-total of Mr. Trefalden's wine-bill and the salary of his French cook, were unfolded with a degree of method and precision eminently characteristic of Mr. Keckwitch's peculiar talents. He had devoted the leisure of the whole summer to this delightful task, and had exhausted his ingenuity in its accomplishment. He had learned everything which it was possible for any man not actually residing within the walls of Elton House to know. He had followed Madame's elegant little brougham to the Parks, listened to her singing in the stillness of the summer evenings, and watched his employer in and out of the house, over and over again. He had ingratiated himself with the Kensington tradespeople; he had made acquaintance with the tax-collector; he had even achieved a ponderous, respectable, church-going flirtation with Madame's housekeeper, who was a serious person, with an account at the savings-bank. In short, when Mr. Keckwitch brought his information to Lombard-street, he knew quite enough to be a valuable coadjutor, and Mr. Laurence Greatorex was only too glad to grasp at the proffered alliance.

"And now, my dear boy," said the banker, "the most important fact of all is just this—William Trefalden is preparing to bolt. For the last two days he has been posting up his accounts, clearing out old papers, and the like. He tells the people in Chancery-lane that he is going out of town for a few weeks; but Keckwitch don't believe it, and no more do I. He has his eye upon the stars and stripes, as sure as your name is Saxon Trefalden!"

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AT THE BAR.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "A CRUISE UPON WHEELS," &c. &c.

CHAPTER XXV. GILBERT ALONE.

THAT missing link which had been wanting to connect Gabrielle Penmore with the foul deed of which she was accused, was now found, and when the adjourned inquest had brought its labours to a close, the verdict arrived at by the jury was unanimous. It was to the effect that "Diana Carrington had died from the effects of a certain poison called laudanum, and that there was every reason to suppose that the said poison had been administered by Gabrielle Penmore;" in short, it was a verdict of Wilful Murder.

Words are tame and ineffective instruments when we have to deal with such a situation as this which is now before us. We are used to such phrases as "Wilful Murder." They are found every day in our newspapers. We do not realise the full meaning of half that we read. We see, perhaps, at the head of a column, "Awful Shipwreck—Loss of One Hundred Lives." But what does this really convey to us? What do we see of the terrible struggling with the icy dark water, the wild giddy whirling of the waves sucking down each one of those hundred men, rushing into his ears, his mouth? What do we know of the pressure of the water upon his chest with such dreadful weight? What do we know of the convulsive sobs with which he gasps for the breath which is to come no more, or of the wild panic which shoots through his mind with the conviction that this is the end. We read the words which imply all this, but they fail to convey to us the full horror of the situation.

And how can any combination of phrases give, in this present case, any idea of the full force of the blow which had fallen upon Gabrielle Penmore and her husband. In most cases, misery such as this is approached gradually. Those on whom the terrible machinery of justice is to be exercised, get used to the sight of it first. They are familiar with inquests, and prison-walls, and custody. To be brought in contact with them is a necessary part of their lives, one of the accidents which they expect. But in this case all was widely different. Here was a young lady brought up from her earliest infancy in a house where she was carefully sheltered from the very approach of evil—where violence and crime were kept at such a distance that she had hardly known of their existence—here was the same young creature suddenly, and with no preparation whatever, brought into a situation which might well have shaken the most hardened nerves, and caused even a veteran criminal to quail.

From the moment of the finding of that terrible verdict, Gabrielle Penmore became a prisoner; not, indeed, a condemned prisoner under punishment, but still an accused person, suspected of a crime, and deprived of liberty. Yes, the men came *to take her away*. They were policemen, and they had their warrant. There was nothing to be done. They were perfectly civil men, but as insensible as if they had been mere machines for executing justice. "They must do their duty," they said, as Gilbert looked at them with glaring, dangerous eyes. He asked if he could at least go with them to the prison? "Oh yes," the men answered, "he could go if he liked. There was a cab at the door. One of the constables must go inside, the other might ride on the box."

And Gabrielle herself, how did she bear this terrible ordeal? She shed no tear, nor uttered any sound of lamentation. She only clung still to her husband, nor ceased to hold his hand for a moment. "You will not leave me till you must," she whispered. "Ask them to let you hold me." She was afraid of being literally taken into custody. One of the men hastily interposed to say that there was "no need to hold that lady. He and his mate must keep close alongside her, that was all." Even in that moment of agony, Penmore felt that there was delicacy in the behaviour of these men, and was grateful.

Then they went on their way, the whole party together. Gabrielle turned as she passed through the door of the little dining-room, and lingered for a moment, as if bidding her home farewell. It was luckily dark now, and so they got into the cab without attracting attention. The cabman himself seemed but little interested in the nature of his job. He was an old man, and it was not the first tragic use to which his vehicle had been put.

They were just about to start, when the poor servant wench came running out of the house, carrying a bundle. She had put up a few things

which she had collected at hap-hazard. Incongruous and heterogeneous odds and ends, which she thought might by possibility be of some use to her mistress. The tears came into Gabrielle's eyes at this, and she took the girl's hand, and pressed it affectionately as they drove away.

The wheels of the cab had actually begun to turn, and were grinding against the kerb-stone of the pavement, when a woman, whom Gabrielle recognised at once for Jane Cantanker, came suddenly forward out of the darkness, and drew near to the window of the vehicle. Appearing thus almost as if she had sprung up out of the earth, she walked for a moment or two by the side of the cab, and peered into the dark corner in which Gabrielle was seated, gazing upon her with devouring insatiable eyes. Keeping beside the cab till at last the driver had urged his horse into a trot, this woman, without uttering one single word, made her hate so felt by the poor prisoner on whom her eyes were fixed, that Gabrielle could not repress a faint cry of terror as she shrank back yet further into her corner, and caught her husband quickly by the hand.

"Oh, Gilbert," she cried, as Cantanker fell back, "that dreadful woman again. I feel sure that she will never rest satisfied till she has got my life."

Gilbert pressed the small hand that lay in his, and tried to answer in a cheering tone, and to make light of the circumstance. But his own heart was very heavy, and at such a time it was but natural that such an occurrence should make an impression of the most ghastly and painful sort. The policeman sitting rigid upon the opposite seat of the cab, stared hard at Gilbert, as if he expected some explanation of that apparition at the cab door. There was none forthcoming, however. Penmore sat motionless and lost, gazing into the street as they drove slowly along. His mind was like a mirror; it received the impression of the objects which came before it, but lost them again as soon as their images had passed away from its surface. They travelled mainly along the poorer sort of streets, the cabman seeming to have, as is the case with some of the fraternity, a preference for these over the gayer and more distinguished thoroughfares. On that outer surface of his mind, whose inner depths were tenanted with such sad and serious thoughts, the names inscribed above the shops, the labels on the goods in the windows, nay, the very prices attached to them, and the invitation to try their quality, addressed, often in comic terms, to the public, were each and all temporarily reflected. Nor did he fail to note how the cab and its living freight was observed and silently commented on by every policeman whose beat lay along their line of route, and each one of whom appeared, however quickly they passed him by, to understand the case thoroughly, exchanging always some telegraphic signal or other with the constable who sat upon the box. These things he noted with his outward senses, but never a one of them was able to dispossess, even for a moment, those dread thoughts which had sole possession of his mind, and held their own there undisturbed.

And so they passed through other streets that were busy, populous, and alive. The shops were lighted up brilliantly, and multitudes of passengers were hurrying hither and thither, all free to go where they liked, and do what they liked. Gilbert and his wife—a prisoner—sat and looked mechanically out of the windows at the passers-by, and freedom seemed a strange thing, and wore an altogether new aspect to both of them.

It was a long drive, but at last they came to the end of it, and the cab drew up suddenly at one of the small doors pierced in the wall of Newgate. Let the reader try to picture to himself such a case as this, and he may form some idea of what tortures the husband, even more than the wife, was called upon to endure. To see his dear Gabrielle carried off to prison, to be powerless to prevent it, to be unable to do more than follow her to the hideous felons' door, where for the time he must leave her. To be unable to move the calm officials, whom in the phrensy of his misery he sought to convince that it must all be some mistake—a thing that could and would be speedily set right; "Gabrielle, Gabrielle," he cried, as she passed down the whitewashed corridor of the prison out of his sight. "Give her back to me," he cried, seizing in his madness the warder by the throat—"give her back to me—or let me go with her."

What could he do? He was overpowered in a moment. The very coolness and good nature of the turnkey whom he had assailed had something of baffling about it. "You'll get an order, sir," said the man, settling his disordered cravat, "and then you'll see her whenever you like. And in the interim there's no harm will come to her. There's the matron to look after her, and she'll be as safe and comfortable—your good lady will—as if she was at home."

It was the beginning and the end of his rebellion. He would gulp down his rage and his misery together, and only allow them way when he was alone. The ravings of his indignation could not help her, and they might do her an injury. Her keepers might be set against her, and they had the power to vex her in a hundred petty ways. He did not think they would, from what he had seen, but they might.

He went home that night to a solitude that was almost unbearable. The house was deserted except by the one miserable servant, Charlotte, for Cantanker, the funeral being over, and Gabrielle Penmore in custody, had gone away to lodgings of her own hard by. It was more lonely and sad than words can tell. It was just the time when all the worst features of any case would be certain to present themselves, and now they all came before our poor Gilbert, and ranged themselves over against him in murderous array. The evidence was, as we have seen, of the most damning kind. It appeared now indeed to be complete. This last

link which had been discovered seemed so conclusive. Who could stand against such an accumulation of facts as were now got together. Gilbert's legal knowledge fitted him in a peculiar way to judge how great the force of those facts was. In the dark lonely house he sat and quailed before the thought of them. Yes, he quailed—the hero of our tale, and I do not hesitate to present him as doing so. Consider the issue that was at stake. It was not some question of property that was to be decided. It was not even some fine that was impending, some minor punishment that threatened. It was death. That frail delicate woman whom he loved, and every pore of whose skin was precious to him, was actually in peril of her life. Might meet—unless something could be done to avert it—a violent death at the hands of the executioner. At such a thought a man must quail, if he has the power of feeling. He may rally afterwards, but he must tremble at first.

As he sat with his head in his hands immersed in these reflections, there came a feeble tap at the door, and the wretched servant-of-all-work appeared hesitatingly at the end of the room, with a pair of candles and a cup of tea which she had prepared. The poor wench was frightened out of her wits, and her eyes were swelled with crying. Gabrielle had been so kind to her, and had won her love, and she had been in tears all the evening. She burst out again when Penmore assured her that her mistress would be made comfortable for the night, and would have a bed to sleep upon. The girl had had visions of a stone dungeon and chains from the moment that Gabrielle had left the house. She was comforted by that thought of the bed.

With the bringing of those lights into the room a change had come over Gilbert's naturally courageous and energetic spirit. To sink down into a condition of despondency, to give up hope and remain a prey to inactive sorrow, was not the part of a man—was, above all, not the way to help his dear Gabrielle. No, he would give way no longer. She was innocent, and he would stir heaven and earth to prove it. There must be a way out of the dark intricacies of this labyrinth, and that way it should be his business to find. Heaven would help him, he prayed and believed, and would make the way plain, and those prison-doors should be thrown open yet, and Gabrielle should pass out of them and be his once more. He wondered now that they had ever complained of their poverty or of anything else in the time before this trouble, and when at any rate they were together. Such a state of things seemed happy indeed now. Might they but attain to it again, there should be no more complaints.

Gilbert sat on long into the night occupied with these and the like reflections, twisting and turning over in his mind all the various questions suggested by the events of the last few days. But he could make nothing of it. Visions of his poor Gabrielle *in prison* came up continually before him, and then all his thoughts began to weave themselves into a sort of pattern, and the same things kept coming round and round in succession. Policemen, doctors, chemist, the figure of the coroner, the face of one of the members of the jury, complete all but one eye, that one missing feature, too, he was obliged to strain every faculty to supply as if his life depended on it; but when he had got it, behold, the mouth was gone next, and presently the juryman himself was gone, and the vacant place left by his removal troubled him not a little. Still it all went round and round; was it a pattern, or was it a tune? There was always something wanting, whatever it was, and after that something he was obliged to strain. Round and round—it was neither a pattern nor a tune; it was a dance, a chain-figure, in and out, round and round. Policemen, doctors, chemist, coroner, incomplete juryman—but what a strange place in which to hold an inquest—the garden of Governor Descartes in the West Indian Island. Perhaps they met there, though, on account of the serpent. For the serpent, winding in and out, and still pursuing his course round and round, kept the pattern, the tune, the dance-figure, or whatever it was — oh, what was it?—kept it together. If he could but follow it, or if it were but complete. Let it be complete, let him grasp it, or let it leave him in peace. No, he must go on with it, and the serpent's head, never once showing the whole time, only the shining scales of his body, gleaming at intervals between the policeman and the doctor, between the chemist and the coroner, binding them all together, and yet—what folly!—letting them all slip through at last.

He was only half asleep all this time; but when he got to be quite asleep, it was not much better; for still he went on with the same miserable work in his dreams, only now he knew that it *was* a dream, and that there would be an awakening, when the policeman, and the chemist, and the coroner, and the winding, glittering snake would leave him in peace at last. They did leave him in peace at last, and he slept, dreamless, in the great leather chair.

When Gilbert awoke, it was broad daylight. The night had passed away then, and the world was alive again. But where was he? What had happened? where was—where was Gabrielle?

Ah, it is a terrible thing that first time of waking after some dreadful thing has happened. Better, one is apt to think, to have kept awake, with the truth before one's eyes, than to have got away from it for a season, only that it may come back again with the deadlier force. When Gilbert woke, and found that he had passed the night in wild dreams and fantastic imaginings, only to wake to a worse horror than all, and to know that it was real, he wished that he had not slept. Yes, it was true. Gabrielle was not there. They had been parted all night. She was away. She was in prison.

But it was daytime now, and very shortly he would be able to see her. There was consola-

tion in that, at any rate. Quick as thought, he was out of the house, and away to the prison. As he passed along the street, he could not help thinking, as he looked into the faces of the passengers whom he encountered, that there was not one of them—not one—who could, be his troubles what they might, have such a terror and such an anxiety pressing down upon his soul as this which was gnawing at his own heart.

Still he pressed on and on; and when he had reached the dreadful door in the prison wall of Newgate, it seemed to him as if he had trod on air all the way, nor could he remember a single circumstance connected with his transit from his house to that place.

He was too early to obtain admission to the prison. The jailer mentioned the hour when he might return, and told him that, in the mean time, he could not do better than apply to the governor of the prison for an order such as would admit him at the proper time.

CHAPTER XXVI. A GREAT TRUST.

THERE is a sort of numbness which comes over us in seasons of extraordinary trial, which seems to be expressly provided to shield us from the full force of the trouble—whatever it may be—which we are passing through. The truth does not show itself to us at first in grim nakedness, but is something veiled and obscured by reason of the dimness which comes over our faculties, descending along with the shock. It is probable that in dreams, and when afflicted with sad night-thoughts, we have most of us known greater horror—though in no real trouble maybe at the moment—than when real misery has come upon us. The imagination has been preternaturally keen in seizing the imaginary misery, but has been dull when it had a terrible reality to deal with.

Gilbert Penmore felt something of this numbness as he followed the turnkey down the corridor which led to the cell in which his poor little wife was shut up. Some incident, such as the grating of a bolt, or the heavy slam of a well-fortified door, would now and then, for an instant, bring a part of the truth before him, and dissipate, for an instant, the mist which hung over his perceptive faculties. At such seasons, a shudder would pass through his frame, and the heart would sink within him, but presently the dim feeling would descend again, rendering all things indistinct. So there have been travellers who, lost in a strange land, wandering on in utter darkness, have for a moment, while a lightning flash endured, seen every feature of the country through which they were passing, and presently have lost it all again, as the darkness has again fallen over the scene.

It was one of these lightning-flash moments of revelation, when all things came out in vividest reality, when the door of Gabrielle's cell was unfastened, and Gilbert was admitted to her place of confinement.

A figure that looked small, and weak, and helpless in the extreme, started up, and Gabrielle rushed forward to meet him. For a moment they were locked in each other's arms, but they were not alone, and with strange, though it must be owned not inquisitive, eyes upon them, could give no way to those transports of love, and joy, and sorrow, which they longed so eagerly to indulge. They sat down side by side in the furthest corner of the cell, and for a time could not speak.

That consciousness that what they said was overheard, kept both of them silent, even when the first overwhelming emotion which attended such a meeting had to some extent passed away, and when at last they did exchange a few words, it was in an under tone, and not yet of the momentous matter with which the hearts of both were full.

"Did you miss me in the evening?" asked Gabrielle, who was the first to speak. "Did you get some sleep?"

She sat with her husband's hand in hers, and could even smile upon him, so great was her contentment to have him there beside her. She could forget the future for the time in the enjoyment of the hour. But with him it was very different. His anxiety was too devouring, too terrible, for any sensation of happiness to co-exist with it. Here, perhaps, was shown the difference of their natures, or it may have been that Gabrielle's fears being for herself were less terrible than those of her husband, whose apprehension was for another, and that other—his wife.

By degrees, they got to be more accustomed to that thought of not being alone, and were able to talk, though still in an under tone, of those important issues which it was absolutely necessary they should discuss. One of the sessions of the court was just about to open, and it was thought likely that the trial would take place almost immediately. It was of the utmost importance, then, that no moment should be lost in taking the necessary steps for the preparation of the defence. Gilbert explained this to his wife, and told her how it would be necessary that he should leave her very shortly in order that he might see to this all-important matter without a moment's delay.

In one instant a thought which had dimly flitted through his own mind along with other misgivings generated by the present trouble, was put before him, no longer as a wild dangerous fancy, but as a thing deserving to be immediately and seriously considered, if not promptly acted upon. It had crossed Penmore's mind that he himself was the right person to stand between Gabrielle and the danger which threatened her, and now he found that this which he had looked upon almost as a crude fancy, was with her nothing less than a fixed idea, a certainty to which she clung with all the force of her nature.

"Why, Gilbert," she whispered, "have you ever doubted who must help me at this time? Shall anybody fight my battles but you?"

He gazed at her in silence, and made no reply. It was the thought of his heart, the crude imagining which he had dismissed, put before

him in a new light. The venture proposed by her who had so much at stake—nothing less than her life.

"Is there anything to prevent it?" she asked, in visible alarm. "Is it against the law?"

"No, Gabrielle, no," answered her husband, gazing at her as if still in doubt. "It is not against the law. I might not be witness for you, it is certain, but I know of no law to prevent me from defending you."

"Then it is settled, Gilbert, is it not?"

Penmore still paused. A great struggle was going on within him. How ought he to act in this strange and surely unprecedented position. As to his instinct, it prompted him to accede at once to Gabrielle's request. But—and then a host of "buts" rose up in terrible array against his doing so. As to the thing being, though consistent with the law, yet contrary to usage, that, and the thought of what people might say, he was determined wholly to disregard. There was too much at stake for questions of etiquette to receive consideration. Those he could dismiss at once. But was he the best man? that was the thought which made him hesitate, even now with Gabrielle holding his hand and looking in his face as she sat there in the prison, waiting for his answer. She shook his hand gently, with a little impatient movement, like a favourite claiming attention.

"Gilbert, why don't you answer me? What are you thinking of?"

"I am thinking of what you have said, Gabrielle," he answered. "It is a thing which demands to be thought over as one would consider an act on which life or death depends."

"But it is *my* life or my—my—death which depends upon it," she said, "and I am ready to run the risk, Gilbert."

"You ready—but am I ready?" asked her husband. "If there is a stronger man than I who could fight for your life with mightier force, or a more skilful, who could defend you with more subtle art——"

"But there is not, Gilbert," said the poor prisoner, simply.

"If there were such an one," continued Gilbert, almost as if speaking to himself, "it would be my duty to seek him out, and secure his aid at once."

"But there is not," said the wife again; "and, if by any chance there were, any such strength and skill possessed by him would be more than counterbalanced by the life interest in what is at issue which you would have, and he could not, and which would inspire you with both strength and wisdom such as no one could resist."

"There is some force in that, indeed," said Gilbert, in a low voice, "but what if that very sense of how much there is at stake, and what the issue of the trial is to me, should not only fail to give me new strength and ability, but should paralyse me for the time, and strip me of what I may already possess?"

"It would not be so, Gilbert," said Gabrielle, "I know. In a smaller matter it might be, but not in this. You would be nerved, not unnerved, by the thoughts you speak of."

A change had come over Gabrielle Penmore. She seemed to be possessed of more strength now than when in less certain danger. The hand of death was held over her now, and seemed about to grasp her. The valley of the shadow lay before her, and yet she flinched not. She who had so quailed before the mere threats of the servant, Jane Cantanker, or at the thought of an inquest being held in the house in which she lived, was, now with the prison walls of Newgate encircling her about, with a trial before her, in which it was to be a question of life or death, endued with a strange and inexplicable courage, such as she could not herself understand. The foreshadowing of a possible danger had scared her more, as it sometimes will, than the danger itself when it had come upon her.

Penmore looked at his wife with amazement. The trial through which she was passing seemed to be developing new qualities in her.

"Gilbert," she pleaded once more, "you, and you only, shall save me. I feel sure that you must do this, and no one else. Why, I should not wish to owe my life to any one but you."

"Gabrielle, it shall be as you say," cried her husband. "I will not hesitate more. The strength of your conviction seems to have something almost ominous about it. I accept the omen, and will from this time allow no doubt or misgiving to come between me and this great undertaking."

Gabrielle would fain have put her arms about his neck, and so have thanked him for thus acceding to her wish, but they were not alone, and because of this both were obliged to put a strong restraint upon their words and actions. She could only press his hand, speechless.

Gilbert, too, was silent for a time. The thought of this that he had undertaken to do was an overwhelming one, and absorbed him almost too much for speech. He would allow no misgiving now, however. The die was cast. He would carry out what he had resolved to do to the utmost of his ability, but he would not reconsider the determination which he had taken.

Presently they began to speak of other things. Gabrielle was full of anxiety for her husband's comforts. Even at such a time as this, her woman's care for these did not slumber.

"You will get nothing to eat now I am away," she said. "You will have no regular meals, I know. You will be uncomfortable and wretched in every way, I am certain." And then she extorted promises from him that he would not let himself be starved, that he would keep up good fires, and, above all things, that he would never let the hope of a happy termination to their present troubles flag within him. Moreover, she sent all sorts of messages to the servant, Charlotte, giving her directions how to order the household during her mistress's absence, so that all things should be well arranged, as far as the thing was possible.

And there were times when the two sat quite

silent, hand in hand—times when they could not speak, or, at any rate, not with any one by to hear their words. They had the sense of being together at such seasons, and that alone was much.

At last the moment came when they could be together no longer. The time allowed for such prison visits as these were limited, and even had it not been so they must still have separated, as there was much work for Gilbert to do, and work that might not be delayed.

The parting was a bitter one. It was true that it was not for long, as Gilbert was to return next day, and every day till—till it was over. But for him to leave her there, a prisoner; for her to be so left was bitter torture to both, and Gabrielle's courage, which had stood so firm but now, was fairly broken down when the moment came for saying good-bye. "She would see him again to-morrow, would she not? But, oh! the time between." And she broke into such bitter sobs as could not be restrained.

"Come away, sir, come away," whispered the jailer to Gilbert. "You'd only make her worse if you was to stay; besides, that can't be."

"Look here, sir," the man said, when they got outside the door, repeating the consolation which he had administered before. "She'll be looked after, your good lady will, and be kep' comfortable and easy in so fur as it's possible. So don't you go fretting about her, or making yourself uneasy in your mind, because it's no use."

In the corridor they met the matron, and it was a sort of comfort to Gilbert to see that she was a woman, at any rate, of agreeable aspect, and pleasant to speak to; a woman with resources, strong in common sense, and with power to influence others—one who would execute well and conscientiously what she had to do, a person, in fact, fit for such an office as it had come to her lot to fill. To her Penmore in earnest terms recommended the poor prisoner whom he had just left, entreating the matron to be very kind and gentle to her, to remember that she was not there under punishment, but in confinement only, and to be with her, herself, as much as might be. And there was comfort to him afterwards in the recollection of a certain trustworthiness in the matron's manner as she promised to do all that lay in her power, all that was consistent with the prison regulations, to mitigate the sufferings which belong inevitably to a state of captivity.

The poor fellow wanted some consolation as he walked away and felt that he was leaving his wife behind in a jail reserved as a place of confinement for the worst malefactors.

But there was work to do, and much of it. It was necessary, first, to select a colleague who could be associated with him in the conduct of this momentous business, some one to whom he could confide certain parts of the arrangements for the defence, a man, too, in whom he could himself have confidence, with whom he could consult, and on whose advice he could place reliance. And such a man he thought he knew of; one with whom he had become acquainted during the long time that he had been in the habit of attending the law courts; to him he would go at once, and, having secured his assistance, it would next be necessary to consider what line should be adopted in preparing the defence, and what witnesses could be found whose evidence would be of service. To these tasks, then, he now applied himself, with what effect we shall not know yet, nor altogether, till that great day of the trial comes which will put his work to the test.

CHAPTER XXVII. A DEADLY HATRED.

In the very heart of the city of London, where the noise and roar of its traffic is at its loudest, where the crowd of human beings is at its thickest, and the movement among vehicles of every description the most incessant, there rises, dark, massive, unshapely, a huge mass of forbidding-looking masonry, which forces itself painfully on the attention of the passer-by. This building rises to no great altitude, though it covers a considerable amount of space. It is chiefly its large extent, its strange clumsy solidity, and a certain blind look which it has, occasioned by the almost total absence of windows, which appeal to your curiosity, and incline you to step aside out of the concourse of persons for ever hurrying past, and gaze up at the ungainly pile with an interest mixed with awe. This edifice, which is built at a corner where two streets join, and where there is an open space of irregular shape, and surrounded by mean squalid-looking houses, presents on the side which gives on the street, where the greatest amount of traffic goes on, no break whatever in its impregnable wall, nor gives any indication whatever of any means of ingress or egress. In the other wall, which faces the irregular open space just spoken of, there are two or three small doors, approached by mean rough flights of steps, and remarkably out of proportion as to their size with the huge building to which they give admittance. If this structure was a mass of rock growing solid out of the solid earth, it could hardly seem more firm or less liable to destruction. It could hardly be more silent or more solitary, standing as it does in the midst of London city, and with the hum of men, and the noise of their doings going on all round about it, if it were situated in the midst of a vast plain, or on the top of some isolated mountain. The walls on the side which stands in the great thoroughfare are smooth from contact with the incessant passers-by, and that very smoothness seems to make them look all the harder, and more relentlessly, and coldly strong.

And what can this place, so huge and silent, and that seems to have such small sympathy with the hurry and bustle which goes on all round about it—what can this place be? It is a prison. Those small doors, spoken of above as piercing one of its walls, are either closely shut and barred, or guarded by the police, and over one of them there hangs, in grim indication of

the nature of the building to which it gives admittance, a set of iron fetters.

We are, in fact, outside the jail of Newgate. One of those great facts, without whose presence among us we might—immersed as we are in the pursuit of business or pleasure—forget the existence of crime and the necessity for its punishment, is here before us. Such appeals to one's senses are met with in this world from time to time. We are apt to forget the crimes which disfigure our commonwealth till we are reminded of them by the sight of a prison, or a prison van; just as we forget all about death till we meet a funeral, or pass an undertaker's shop.

It is twelve o'clock at night, and darkness lies over the great city. The number of passengers whose garments come in contact with the stones of the prison wall has diminished very greatly, though it has not yet reached its minimum. How hurriedly they pass along, and how few have leisure to steal a glance up at those frowning walls, or to think for what purpose they are there. This is, in fact, no lounging-place for idlers. Few come this way, few frequent this dingy ill-favoured locality, unless brought here by business of some kind or other. It is an ugly corner of the world this, and no man would seek it out for his pleasure.

And yet there is one person who has for some considerable time occupied a position here, who would not seem to have been brought to this place by any matter connected with business on this particular night. Standing on the edge of the pavement which borders that open space already spoken of, on the side opposite to that occupied by the jail wall, is the figure of a woman, motionless as a statue, dark as a fate.

The woman is dressed in common garments, and is closely muffled in a woollen shawl, and she has stood in this one place for upwards of an hour without stirring. From the position which she has taken up, she can see the whole of the edifice opposite, from the point where a small yard divides it from the court-house of the Old Bailey to where it is bounded by the busy thoroughfare of Newgate-street. All this length of wall, together with the indications of buildings within it which appear above the chevaux-de-frise, she has continually scanned with a curious yet satisfied eye. No circumstance connected with that piece of solid masonry escapes her, no incident connected with the jail, such as the entrance or exit of an official at one of the doors, or a change of duty among the policemen about the place, is lost upon her. Her eye sweeps the whole building from end to end, and from side to side, with a sort of grim pleasure such as this gloomy spectacle does not for the most part afford.

By-and-by she moves, and crossing this open space, in which carts laden with hay and straw are standing in considerable numbers, waiting for next day's market, she arrives under the very prison walls on the opposite side of the way, and commences a nearer examination of them. She passes along under the massive stonework, scrutinising it as she walks by. She gazes up at the small closed doors, peering into their fastenings and their hinges of iron. She follows thus the entire course of the wall along the Old Bailey and Newgate-street, and then pursuing that thoroughfare, she turns aside into the narrow street about Newgate-market, and seeks to get some glimpses of that eastern side of the jail which the market bounds.

There was less apparently to satisfy her here, and she soon came back to the region she had just left, seeming to find a pleasure now in gratifying her sense of touch, as she had formerly that of sight, by feeling the walls with her fingers, suffering her hands to drag against them as she walked along, and touching the iron-work of the small but massive doors which were, as has been said, on the Old Bailey side of the prison.

She reached in this way the extreme southern limit of the building, where the thoroughfare in which it stands begins to narrow, and here she stood for a while feeling the stones with her hands, and actually, as it were, caressing them with a sort of unnatural fondness. It was a strange sight to see this woman hanging thus about the place, and she was not unobserved by the policemen about the prison. But they were used to queer things happening there, and knew that when some young fellow new to the ways of crime got into "trouble," and came to be confined in Newgate, it was no very unusual thing for his mother or his "young woman" to come and haunt the place where the son or the lover, as the case might be, was going through his novitiate of jail life. So they took no notice of Jane Cantanker, for it was she, and left her free to follow her own devices, and bestow all the blandishments she felt inclined upon the Newgate stonemasonry.

She had wandered down to this place to see and judge of, with her own senses, the strength of this prison in which the murderess of her dear mistress was kept secure, and now as she estimated its mighty proportions, and touched its massive stones, she positively seemed to love it, as she gloated over its prodigious power of retention.

"Ah," she said, her triumph at last finding vent in words, and addressing the very stones of the prison wall, "you're rough and you're strong, you are, and you're piled up one upon another, and fixed together with stiff cement, and there are more of you inside as hard and as rough as these, and when one wall's passed, there's another ready beyond it, and all the doors are barred with iron, and set like these with iron nails, and you've kept in strong men before now, and men that were used to picking locks and forcing bolts, and surely you'll be able to keep a woman safe, a woman with soft white hands, that aren't too white, though, or too soft to commit a murder with, and mix the poison that killed my poor dear lady."

She looked up again at the great square stones, smoke-blackened and weather-hardened.

"I never thought," she said, "to have had

her safe within such walls as them. When one delay came after another, and with all their inquests and adjournments they failed to make sure of her, what would I have given to have had her shut up here. But it came at last, the end and the verdict, which I heard—'Wilful murder,' 'Wilful murder,' 'Wilful murder.'"

As Jane Cantanker uttered these terrible words, a man who had approached without her hearing him, so absorbed was she in her own vindictive joy, came suddenly upon her, and, startled by the sounds, looked hard into her face, as if to see what sort of woman this could be who awoke the neighbouring echoes with such awful words.

He was a tall stout man this, with a florid happy countenance, and that peculiar light elastic tread which is so often observable in fat people. He looked like the embodiment of health and contentment, as he stood in the light of the adjacent gas-lamp, and formed a striking contrast to the grim malignant-looking woman by his side.

Cornelius Vampi, whom the reader has no doubt recognised from this description, was just returning from a long expedition into the Borough. He had been obliged to make this journey in search of some rare drugs which were required for the exigencies of the art mystic, and which he was in the habit of getting from a certain Jewish gentleman of his acquaintance, who resided in a very obscure back street in Southwark. Our astrologer had got what he required, and was working his way back to his own abode, when, passing through the Old Bailey, he came suddenly, as we have seen, upon Jane Cantanker, and recognised in her the woman who applied to him for such assistance of a supernatural sort as he was neither able nor willing to afford. This person, and everything connected with her, was so far from his thoughts at the time, that for the moment he was completely bewildered by the encounter. Jane Cantanker, on her side, was equally unprepared for such a meeting, and so the two remained for some time staring at each other in silence. Cantanker was the first to speak.

"Well," she said, with an air of triumph, "I have done without your help, you see."

"'See,'" echoed Vampi. "I see nothing, except that you are here at midnight, outside the jail of Newgate, and talking about wilful murder. What do you mean by 'having done without my help?'"

"I mean, that she is here, safe and sound within these walls;" and she laid her hand upon the stones as she spoke.

"And who is 'she?'" asked Cornelius.

"The woman against whom your faint heart refused to work a spell—Gabrielle Penmore."

"'Penmore?' Why, that was the name I was trying to remember. And who is Gabrielle Penmore? I have never heard the name except from you."

"What! have you not heard?" asked the woman, with something of contempt. "Do you never read the newspapers?"

"Seldom, if ever."

"Well then, read them now—or may be in a week from this time—and then you'll see who Gabrielle Penmore is, and how she comes to be here shut up in Newgate, and you'll see how she will be tried for murder—yes, and found guilty, too—and hanged in this very street in which we are standing."

"This is horrible," said our harmless philosopher, shrinking back mechanically from this tigress of a woman, "most horrible."

"What's horrible?" she asked.

"Why, to hear the vindictive spirit in which you talk. It is revengeful, malignant—horrible, I say again."

"It's nothing of the kind," the woman answered. "It's justice, that's what it is. She's committed a crime, and it's only justice that she should suffer for it."

"Yes, but justice doesn't demand that you should show this fiendish glee. If even what you say is true, and some poor wretch, stained with such crimes as you have been talking of, does lie imprisoned within these mighty walls, that is no reason why you should triumph, should actually seem to gloat over the misery of one who should now, at any rate, be an object for your pity rather than your hatred."

The woman came close up to Cornelius: "You talk of 'gloating,'" she said, "that is a good word. I do gloat, and I mean to do so. I tell you that, since she's been in confinement, I come here every night to gloat. Why, I've been round to all the different jails in London, and about it, to compare 'em with this one, and to see whether I'd have liked any one of 'em better for her prison, and they're none of them to compare to this. There's some of 'em are built slighter, and some of them are too light and airy, and some too handsome, and not looking like prisons at all—but this—ah, this is something like a prison. This looks hard, and cold, and pitiless, and strong; a great bare wall, with no windows to break it up, or make you think there's pleasant rooms inside. It *is* a prison, and it looks *like* a prison, with fetters, iron fetters, hanging up above the door, and a gallows, as I am told," here she whispered, "shut up in an inner court, and ready at an hour's notice. Something like a prison that."

Cornelius again drew back, and gazed upon this terrible creature with a mixed wonder and dismay.

"Stop!" he cried, "I will hear no more of this. What have I done that you select me to listen to these monstrous ravings. First of all, you come to me to ask me to give you a charm against your enemy, to curse her, to inflict some supernatural evil upon her; and now you bid me listen to words so cruel, so unwomanly, that the sound of them makes me shrink from you as I never thought to shrink from any human being."

Cornelius Vampi spoke with horror in his tones, for he was a man, as we have seen, of a benevolent disposition, and possessed of a kind and gentle heart, and the violence of this woman

shocked and horrified him. The vulgarities which characterised her speech, too, made the thing worse.

"Look at those stones," she continued. "She's walled up inside them. She'll not get out easily, will she? I bless these stones, I tell you," she continued savagely, "because they're so strong and solid. They'd defy a stronger frame than hers."

"The woman's mad," thought Vampi to himself, and the reflection consoled him. He began to think that she was suffering under some delusion, and that all he had seen and heard might thus be accounted for. He remained for a time watching her. She had ceased to take any notice of his presence now, and was again feeling the stones with her hands, and muttering about their strength as she had done before.

"Something like a prison this," repeated the woman.

The conviction of her insanity impressed itself more than ever upon Vampi's mind as he observed her, and the horror with which she had originally inspired him was now changed to compassion. A cold drizzling rain was beginning to fall.

"Don't you think you had better go home?" he asked. "Come, I will walk part of the way with you, if you like."

"No," she answered, "I shall stop here. At all events, I would not go with you. You refused me the assistance that I wanted, and now I wish to have nothing to do with you. Leave me. You're one of the faint-hearted ones, that's what you are."

Cornelius paused for a moment, as if uncertain how to act. He looked up and down the street. Then he seemed to have made up his mind, and went his way up the Old Bailey, in the direction of Newgate-street.

Cantanker watched him mechanically as he passed along under the gas-lamps, and she saw that when he came to where the policemen were grouped about the prison door, he stopped and spoke to one of them, and pointed as he did so to where she was standing. Then she saw him no more, but observed that the policeman who had been addressed was advancing towards her with the leisurely step which belongs to his tribe.

"Come, missus," he said, speaking kindly enough, "what are you up to?"

The police, and more especially those who guarded the prison-doors, were, in the eyes of Jane Cantanker at this time, more angels of justice than mere men. She was ready to do anything they bade her.

"Oh, sir," she said, "I'm not doing any harm. But you'll take care of her, won't you, and keep her very close."

For her there was no other prisoner in that jail of Newgate but Gabrielle Penmore.

The man had been told by Cornelius that he thought there was a poor mad creature hanging about there, so he humoured her, according to time-honoured usage, pretending to know what she meant.

"Oh yes," he said, in a reassuring tone, "*we*'ll look after her, keep her as snug as a mouse in a trap."

"That's right," said the woman, drawing in her breath. "The trap's a strong one."

"Uncommon strong," the man replied. "Now, suppose you leave it to us, and go home; why, it's raining fit to drownd any one."

"I'll do anything you wish, sir," said Jane Cantanker. "That I will."

"Well, then, go home, and get to bed, that's what you'd better do. It's bad enough for us to be standing about in the wet that's obliged."

"I'll go home at once," replied the other, "and I'm sorry you should have to get wet. Good night, sir."

"Good morning, you mean. Why, it's past one o'clock." He stood and watched her as she sped away in the rain. "She's got some muck or other into her head," he said to himself; "but she does as she's told, at any rate, which is more than all of them will."

The policeman had a better-half, or rather three-quarters, at home.

The neighbourhood was at its quietest. The traffic in the busy thoroughfare which bounded the jail on its northern side, had reached its minimum. Traffic there was there always, but now and for the next two hours it would be less than at other times. It was just the hour in the morning when the City is comparatively quiet, when the night noises are nearly at an end, and the morning noises have hardly begun. The rain, too, helped to empty the streets. It was not a time for anybody to be out who could possibly help it.

This one person, then, who has just turned from Ludgate-hill into the Old Bailey, must, doubtless, have some pressing reason for passing this way on such a night, and at such an hour. He is not very warmly clad, and is evidently very wet already, and yet, from the moment of his turning into the thoroughfare just mentioned, he ceases to hurry himself, but walks along almost at a leisurely pace, and with his eyes fixed upon that great frowning mass of darkness, the prison, which, now that the rain has fairly set in, looks more forbidding and ominous than ever.

At last, from slow walking, almost lounging indeed, so dilatory is his pace, our passenger presently ceases to advance at all, and, arresting his progress altogether, stands upon the edge of the pavement, just where Jane Cantanker stood but a little while before, and gazes up at the prison walls.

Who is it that comes thus when other people are sleeping in their warm beds, and takes his station there outside the doors of Newgate? Who is it that disregards the bitter cold and the pouring rain that he may keep watch over against that dreadful place? His eyes sweep the enclosure of the jail from side to side, and from end to end, and as he looks a dimness comes before them, and presently his lips are moving, though no audible words pass from out of them.

It is Gilbert Penmore. He has promised the poor prisoner within those walls that he would pass outside them in the course of the night, but at some time which should not be specified; for she had said that it would be a comfort to her, if she were awake and fearful, to think that, perhaps at that very moment, he was near her, and praying for her in his heart of hearts.

AGAINST THE GRAIN.

Against the grain we went in search of the low Betting-Men, and against the grain we found them. After earnest consultations with persons learned in their crooked ways; after studying their literature, and hearing many a story of their nefarious cunning; after holding commune with experienced members of the metropolitan force, and learning from all sources that personal contact and face to face intercourse were essential to the comprehension of their evil natures and corrupt pursuits; our distasteful explorations were inaugurated by a trip to "the Ruins." Not the picturesque ruins of abbey or castle; not a spot familiar to pic-nic parties and beloved of artists; not a crumbling old mansion, with haunted chamber and ghost-walk, with traditions of murder and dreary look of desolation; but a large blank space, like an exaggerated pound, in which the noble sportsmen of Whitechapel and Seven Dials were daily congregated. These were the creatures we had decided on looking for;—these were the creatures we found against the grain. For, after infesting for years the vast area of waste ground between the Farringdon-road and Saffron-hill; after impudently vaunting their superiority to the law, and their right to make bets in public; the disreputable crew of small book-makers, touts, thieves, and tipsters who gave the ground an unholy fame, and made it, as "the Ruins," familiar to the lower grade of turf followers all over the kingdom, have been "moved on" to a narrow thoroughfare behind one of the great London breweries, and here they bet, and lie, and shuffle, in an atmosphere pleasantly laden with the flavour of malt and hops, and with the aromatic grain heaped above and behind them in great profusion.

Wonderful were the stories concerning the impotence of the police; and profound was the belief in "the Ruins" as a stronghold. The commercial prejudices of the narrow-minded dwellers in Bride-lane, City, had certainly triumphed over the lovers of sport; and out of a mistaken deference to the petty interests of trade, these patrons of the turf had been forcibly removed. But here, at "the Ruins," who had a right to interfere? Not the authorities of the Refuge for the Homeless Poor just opposite, nor those of the Metropolitan Railway station, nearer still; nor the Italian handicraftsmen, organ-keepers, plate-glass polishers, monkey and marmozet boys, who form the population on the western side. Field-lane even, though denuded of its festoons of purloined handkerchiefs, and now steadily aiming at respectability, could not decently make a protest. Saffron-hill did not understand its rights, and would not exercise them if it did; and "the Ruins," flanked and surrounded as it is by such localities, was clearly designed as an oasis in the cold desert of London, upon and from which lovers of the turf and those interested in the preservation of the manly sport of betting, might flourish and hold forth. Quiet wayfarers passed with a shudder, or meekly crossed the road. Knowing omnibus-drivers pointed to the shouting disreputable crowd with a sportsman-like jerk of the whip-hand; newspaper essayists described the foul spot and its customs; argumentative reasoners quoted the act of parliament, and made it clear that the words "house or place" could not apply to "the Ruins"; and the public and the authorities seemed to concur in the notion that here bets could be booked, and lists kept, and fools swindled, in spite of special enactments, and in defiance of the law. Now and again some troublesome nobody would take exception to this condition of things, and an indignant letter would find its way into the papers; but the rule seemed to be that policemen and magistrates, beadles and moralists, should wink at what they knew to be wrong, but which, by some strange freak of parliamentary wisdom, could not be boldly grappled with and put down.

All this came to an end a few weeks ago. "The Ruins" were enclosed by a hoarding instead of posts and rails, and all trespassers warned off under legal penalties, by the authorities of the city of London. Attempting to meet on the adjacent pavement and roadway, they were summarily cautioned against causing an obstruction, and if recalcitrant, were taken into custody by the metropolitan police. A double jurisdiction obtains in this district; and while the City constables had power over the list-keepers who ventured in the enclosure, Sir Richard Mayne's merry men pounced upon them if they presumed to pitch their tents in the street. It seems but a prosaic ending to such a grandiloquent and apparently successful protest against conventionality, but neither difficulty nor delay attended the rout when it was once determined on; and after one or two feeble attempts at self-assertion, the frouzy blackguards, to whom "the Ruins" had seemed a privileged Alsatia, slunk away into congenial holes and corners, and were no more seen. So, at least, thought the reformers. But, as if in obedience to the physical law which declares that nothing shall be destroyed, and that what we call destruction is only another name for change of condition, the nuisance was transferred, and now flourishes in rank luxuriance against the brewery grain.

Starting from a police-station in a long flagged court in St. Giles's — a police-station so modestly retiring that it seems to be playing at hide-and-seek with its customers, and to have won the game—the first evidence we have of the contiguity of the noble sportsmen is furnished by a gentleman who comes to

prefer a charge. A tall fresh-looking man of fifty, a prosperous farmer, or country attorney with a good seat across country; this gentleman nervously twiddles two small bits of pink pasteboard—not unlike the checks given for readmission to the theatres—and with a troubled expression, half indignation, half shame, on his good-tempered florid face, explains that one piece of pasteboard represents three pounds, and the other two pounds ten. He staked these sums upon the horse which came in first yesterday, and on applying this morning for the money he had consequently won, the list-keeper, although then prosecuting his calling, had first laughed in his face, and subsequently threatened to "punch his head if he didn't hook it, and that (adverb) quick too." Staggered and discomfited, the luckless winner now came to the police-office, with a vague hope, which his own common sense obviously told him to be baseless, that some steps might be taken to punish the swindler, and indemnify him for his loss. Clearly not a case for the police. Perhaps a summons in the county court for the money borrowed might answer the gentleman's purpose; perhaps some means of exposing the fraudulent list-keeper might occur to him; but his money was gone for ever, and the best advice that could be given him was, "Don't bet with strangers in the street again."

We saw the "Welsher"—for, with dubious compliment to the Principality, such is the slang name for turf defaulters, who are at once petty and fraudulent—a few minutes afterwards, calmly pursuing his vocation amid a crowd of his fellows. The victim was detailing his wrongs, and showing his tickets as corroborative evidence, within earshot of the swindler, who smoked a cigar in the intervals of shouting, "I'll lay four to one, bar one!" with imperturbable calm. No one seemed surprised, or shocked, or indignant. The farmer was stared at as he told his little story, with a sheepish, wobegone look on his jolly visage, which made it wonderfully ludicrous; and then the starers elbowed through the crowd to gaze on the Welsher, who was decidedly the more popular of the two. The mournful, "He won't even answer me, and says he'll punch my head," was heard concurrently with the jubilant, "I'll lay four to one;" and three half-crowns went into the pocket of the list-keeper for a fresh ticket, while within a few paces the worthlessness of his promises was being half timorously, half indignantly, proclaimed.

We are by this time in the thick of the jostling and shouting crowd. A narrow street, destitute of shops and dwelling-houses, the huge brewery forming one side of it, and the back of warerooms in Oxford-street filling up the other, this place is not unlike a long and narrow prison-yard. The height of the dull and dirty brick walls, the absence of windows or other signs of habitation, the circumscribed area, and the elaborate lack of view, strengthen this comparison. But the prisoners have run riot, and discipline is at an end. "How do, Tom?" remarks with careless dignity one of the two detectives who kindly accompany me. "How do you do, sir? Fine morning, isn't it?" replies a fat coarse fellow, who looks like a fraudulent pig-jobber in reduced circumstances. He is the first sportsman we speak to, and after scanning his villanous countenance, I learn with much satisfaction that "he's just had six months for theft." My companions are speedily recognised, and the word is passed that some one must be "wanted." This is uniformly effected by a whisper from lips twisted as if practising ventriloquism, and in such fashion that the sound proceeds in an entirely opposite direction to that of the speaker's cunning eyes and shifty face. The list-keepers are ranged in an unbroken line from one end of the street to the other. The lists are mounted upon poles, the odds for each forthcoming race being printed upon small white cards, of the size and shape of photographic *cartes de visite*. These are placed side by side, the proprietor waiting for victims, and in most instances his clerk or partner booking the bets as soon as made. There are between seventy and eighty of these lists, and I am assured that it is only about ten per cent of this number which are "square." In other words, nearly all the vociferous blackguards I see pocketing shillings, and half-crowns, and sovereigns, are thieves, or skittle-sharpers, or three-card men, or their associates. They *may* redeem their pledges and pay the money they lose, but only if it suits their pocket to do so; and as to-day is the last great turf event of the year, the probabilities of "bolting" are greater than usual. Amid the crowd of dupes and hangers-on, is a leaven of respectability. Railway guards in uniform are "putting on" small sums on commission for country clients. That shiny-looking man, whose stiff black curls protrude from under his wide-brimmed hat, and whose rounded face—of a polished red and yellow, like a Normandy pippin—speaks somehow of the footlights, is one whose name is familiar to us as the advertised "only successor to Grimaldi." He is no list-keeper, but has come to invest some of the proceeds of "Hot Codlins" and "Tippety-Witchet" with the great Mr. Gather, who is one of the few trustworthy men here. "Good for thousands; has a house in Great Bustle-street, and a tidy little farm in the country; keeps two clerks to book his bets for him, and is as safe as the Bank of England." Such is the character I have of Mr. Gather, who, as he leans against the wall, is beset by dozens of people eagerly holding out gold and silver, which he drops mechanically into the pocket of his brown over-coat, saying, in a monotone, "Fours—Harlequin—right." "Sevens—Disappointment—right." A fresh-coloured rather anxious-looking man of thirty, with a fair moustache and smooth cheeks, Mr. Gather neither smiles nor speaks further, save when the crowd becomes more than usually oppressive, when "Please keep back those who don't want to bet," is extorted from him in a melancholy voice, and with a weary air, as if even unbounded suc-

cess as an out-door betting-man had its drawbacks, and as if in the duties involved in that high position, there lurked corresponding cares. Blight and Lovenote is also a firm in which unlimited confidence may be placed, and I show my faith in this testimony to character by modestly putting half-a-crown upon the favourite of the day. Neither the name of the people I bet with, nor that of the horse I back, nor the sum I pay, nor the sum I am to receive if he wins—he made what the sporting papers subsequently called "a bad fifth"—are given on the ticket I received from Blight. "Four half-crowns —Favourite, Jem," to the clerk, and the pleasant clink made by my half-crown, as it joins the half-crowns of other investors, in the capacious pocket of the firm, is the only evidence afforded me of my contingent rights. So when another respectable list-keeper is pointed out to me—my companions select the honest men out of the crowd, and show them as curiosities, much as a gardener would point out a singular case of grafting, or a rare exotic which had been transplanted without injury—I am checked in my desire to give him money by the candid words: "I can't afford to lay a fair price, for my book is full." As this man pays when he loses, he makes calculations as to the state of his book. Not so the ordinary run of list-keepers here. The proverb as to all being fish that comes to net, is rigidly acted up to, and the terms they offer are not unfrequently threefold the market price. Above their lists are printed a name generally assumed, and an address almost always fictitious. Round them, besides their clerk or partner, stand a little group of associates, who make sham bets, or who volunteer false information with genial readiness. That man in the loose claret paletot, and the large glass-headed pin in his shabby stock, has been known to the police for the last twenty years as living "by besting people." "Besting," I learn, is a playful term for gaining an unfair advantage, and applies equally to the three-card trick, to skittle-sharping, to fraudulent tossing, and to larceny. That bullet-headed ruffian who is truculently shouting out the large odds he'll give, is a convicted thief, and the short bristly hair you see fringing the back of his fleshy neck, was last trimmed and cut, in the prison he has just left. The Jew whom we afterwards see greedily calling for hot pork sausages at the tavern round the corner, as if to realise that combined "gust of eating and pleasure of sinning" craved after by Boswell's friend, and whose name is familiar to every reader of police reports, was a night-house keeper near the Haymarket, until the bill for the early-closing of refreshment-houses was passed. He winks knowingly to his fellows as we come near his stand, and with mock earnestness solicits us to put "a trifle on." "Who are the other list-keepers?" repeat my friends the detectives. "Cross-men, every one of 'em." By cross-men, meaning men on the cross, men, in fact, who'd rob you if they could. "There's a man now"—indicating, with a quiver of the eyelid, a bull-necked muscular scamp in a frogged coat two sizes too small for him—"there's a man who'd garotte you the very minute you gave him a chance. That fellow next him has been in prison three times to my knowledge, and the big man booking that young butcher's half-crown, used to keep a gambling-house and take a table round to the races." A retired publican, who's lost all his money; a cab-owner, who's been through the court; a broken-down gentleman's servant, who's lost his character and can't get another place; a clerk in the City who was up for embezzlement, but wasn't convicted; these were the descriptions given of some of the list-keepers, whose comparatively decent look made me ask their history.

But the preponderating scum was of a much less reputable character, and a large majority of the workpeople, shopboys, small tradesmen, and country people who either in person or by deputy invested their small sums, placed them in the hands of men whose calling has been to batten upon the public from their youth up. "Is Sir Richard a-goin' to move us from here next?" asked a pock-marked vagabond in a long drab coat. "*I* hope not," was dryly given in reply, and the emphasis was so marked that the question, "Vy so?—vot difference would it make to you?" naturally followed. "We should be troubled with so many burglary cases," was quietly answered; whereupon drab-coat leered and grinned as if to return thanks for the compliment paid to the predatory instincts of himself and friends. The experience was unvaried during our stay. A stooping, slouching fellow, with a battered ugly face, was pointed out as an ex-champion in the prize-ring, who had since taken to betting, and who now kept a list "on the square;" and we chatted with three old women like modern witches, with stout cotton umbrellas for familiars, who are to be seen here daily, and who back horses and talk on "merits" and "performances" and pedigrees with a full mastery of stable slang. "The brewery people ain't likely to interfere," I learnt, "because these betting fellows spend their time and their money in public-houses, and it's good for trade," and as long as the foul sore their presence implies, keeps in its present locality, it may perhaps be permitted to fester on with impunity. One thing is worth remarking. After an hour or two's sojourn, we adjourned to converse on the characters and antecedents of some of the men we had just left. On our return, neither the convicted "Welsher" nor his stand could be seen. "There's been a little fuss up yonder, and they've bonneted a cove as wouldn't pay!" was the information vouchsafed to us, and we failed to learn anything more specific. Plenty of eager informants to tell us there had been a row, but none of these would confess to having witnessed it, or that they knew its precise nature. Whether the injured farmer had hired hangers-on to pay those punching compliments to his debtor, which had been so freely promised to the farmer himself; whether he had taken the law into his own hands and boldly fought it out; or whether, out of deference to the presence of my friends, a council of war had been held in our

absence, and the other fraudulent list-keepers had forcibly urged their brother to depart for the common good; we could not learn. The men were gone, and "Judas's telegrams from the course" were being sold from their late standing-point. I purchased one of these, and, on opening its sealed envelope, was edified by reading: "The only one I'm afraid of is No. 13, blue 1. He is very fit and strong. Signed for Judas, T. Scroper." What "Blue 1" meant, or who was "fit," could of course only be known to Judas's initiated clients, and I preserve the magic tissue paper as one more of the many useless purchases accumulated during a desultory life.

Soon after two P.M. the street began to clear. "From eleven to two is their time for business, so as to catch the workmen in their dinner-hour; and you'll often see three men club together to make up half-a-crown to put on a horse they fancy." Before three the lists and list-keepers, the huge gig umbrellas with "From the Ruins" painted in large black letters on their white gingham covering, the bonnets, victims, hangers-on, and thieves, the boys with the handicap-books, the respectable countrymen, and the ornaments of the prize-ring, had departed. At four the same day the place was a solitude, broken only by the brewer's drays in which the bags of grain were being dexterously piled, and from which the rope, half hemp, half metal, ascended and descended with monotonous rapidity, twining and writhing as it went, like some monstrous serpent, into the ear-like wooden excrescences near the roof above.

The same scene goes on daily during the racing season, and similar nests of ruffianism are known to exist elsewhere in London. For two or three hours in each day, common swindlers openly practise their calling with impunity, and they so choose their hours as to prey upon the class which can afford it least. The small minority of solvent men—the people who gamble legitimately, pay when they lose, and bet upon scientific principles—have, to the uninitiated eye, nothing to distinguish them from their thievish compeers; and the workman or shop-lad who foolishly risks his money in Grain-land, does so, as was proved by what we saw and heard, in most cases, with the certainty of never seeing it again. This is surely a case in which the strong hand of authority might be exerted with advantage, and the exodus from "the Ruins" be followed by a like purifying process elsewhere. That men will gamble, and that horse-racing is a national amusement, are not pleas for the encouragement of open fraud. It is time that the miserable nonsense about "upholding English sports," and "interfering with the pastimes of the people," was exploded and put down. The sport here is of that gay and festive character for the encouragement of which we build prisons and maintain hulks. The sportsmen, apart from the honest minority I have instanced, are jail-birds, or men at open war with society. The nuisance as it exists now is a far worse pest and deeper disgrace than the petty tavern sweepstakes and small list-houses which were, amid a chorus of national self-praise, put down by act of parliament a few years ago.

It would be curious to know how far the impunity accorded to these scoundrels is due to that superstitious veneration for what is called "the old school," and that servile admiration of "patrons of the turf," which is one of the most curious weaknesses of a large section of English society. The finest specimen I ever knew of the class to whom it is the fashion to apply these stock phrases, was always unexceptionably dressed in drab cords, top-boots, and a blue body-coat with brass buttons. He was blessed with a hale and hearty constitution, regular features, a florid complexion, and venerable white hair. Apart from his clothes, his personal advantages, and his love of horseflesh, his chief peculiarities were excessive testiness, a dislike to reading, a habit of taking more liquor than was good for him, and of swearing in his drawing-room. Whenever he distinguished himself in any of these capacities, we looked admiringly at the drab cords and the brass buttons, and murmured with approval of his love of sport, and his undoubted right to the title of a fine old English gentleman. He was not particularly wise nor particularly useful in his generation, and but for the peculiar fascination of his dress, flippant people might have thought him uninteresting and dull. All his weaknesses—improvidence, coarse language, and incapacity—were, however, accepted as so many virtues, out of deference to his attachment for the turf. This was among a pastoral people, by whom he was regarded as a sort of king; but my experience in Grain-land makes me ask if the same sort of fetish worship exists among those connected with the execution of the law, and whether a purely supposititious connexion with the race-course is held to entitle detected swindlers and convicted felons to prey upon the credulous and ignorant, without dread of punishment or prospect of interference?

POOR MEN'S GARDENS.

No waxen blossoms stained with rainbow hues,
No crimson-flush of petals, heaven-dyed,
No spoils of distant zones and eastern shores,
Snatched from the poisonous woods to feed man's pride;

No spiked and spotted aloes, dagger fenced,
No lilies floating on their leafy raft,
No air-plants dappled like great butterflies,
Spice odours from the Orient isles to waft;

But just one little bush of southernwood,
Fragrant and evergreen as honesty,
And clumps of purple hearts-ease rarely found
In rich men's gardens, wheresoe'er they be.

A tufted rod of hollyocks, with rosettes,
For bower-pot or for posy; or a bed
Of blood-red scented cloves, so jagg'd and quaint,
To deck a Sunday coat with tuft of red.

A plant of marigold, with golden glow,
To spread perennial sunshine o'er the plot,
A winter rose, to bloom when summer's gone,
And cast a gleam of hope when spring's forgot.

Yes, in the poor man's garden often grow
Far more than herbs, or fruit, or pleasant flowers,
Kind thoughts, Contentment, Gratitude, and Love,
And balms and anodynes for weary hours.

WITH THE LORD MAYOR ON HIS OWN DAY.

I SPENT a whole day lately with the Lord Mayor of London, and the day I spent with him was his own day—the ninth of November. I had often seen the show from the outside, standing among the crowd, and been rudely pushed back, as one of the little boys "who hadn't got no money;" but now I was about to walk up, walk up and see the live lions at feeding-time. I went in with an order, and, as it oddly happens to "orders," I had one of the best seats, and was enabled to see everything. I complied with the kind injunction to come early and be in time, and arrived at the Guildhall at ten o'clock.

As I am about to relate all that I did and saw on this memorable day, it may be convenient to divide my narration into "heads." There are four of them. Firstly, I breakfasted with the Lord Mayor; secondly, I lunched with the Lord Mayor; thirdly, I rode in the procession (not in armour) with the Lord Mayor; and fourthly and lastly, I dined with the Lord Mayor. This brief synopsis will not only serve to keep me to my text, but will, I trust, give the reader a proper notion of my importance, and bespeak respect for myself, and interest for my subject, at the outset. Shakespeare has been much commended for his skill in arousing curiosity at the very opening of his play of Hamlet with a portentous conversation about a ghost, which is to appear shortly. So, when I open my civic pageant with breakfast in the Guildhall, I am in hopes that my audience will keep their seats until the curtain falls upon the banquet. I cannot promise them a ghost at the feast, but I can venture to say that the procession in the third act has been carried out with due regard to splendour combined with dignity; that the dresses and properties are new and gorgeous, and that the banquet scene in the last act has been got up on a scale of magnificence never before attempted, and utterly regardless of expense.

Theatrical parlance is not inappropriate here, for the preparations going forward at the Guildhall at ten o'clock are strongly suggestive of the last rehearsal (with scenery and properties) previous to the production of the grand spectacle. A crowd of workmen are busy in the outer hall and corridors, laying down matting and carpets, hanging up flags and festoons, arranging guns and cutlasses in fancy devices over the doors, setting out pots of flowers and boxes of shrubs, nailing, sawing, planing, and hammering, showing the greatest activity, but yet giving little assurance that "it will be all right at night." Here I encounter the Lord Mayor's committee carrying white wands, all appearing to be rehearsing the same part, as if it were Hamlet that was going to be done, with fourteen Poloniuses; here also I find the sword-bearer and the mace-bearer standing at the wing, ready dressed to "go on," and apparently muttering their parts. Proceeding onwards through a grove of painters' steps, and piles of matting, and tubs of aloes, and other plants not yet allotted to their places, I suddenly enter the Guildhall, and find a legion of waiters laying acres of damask cloth upon a vast perspective of festive tables. Now I am behind the scenes indeed! Who can say that he has seen the Lord Mayor's cloth laid in the Guildhall on the ninth of November? You may have been invited to the banquet, my friend, and seen the Hall when all was prepared and ready, but these mysteries you have never been permitted to gaze upon. Let me assure you, then, that the Lady Mayoress was not in attendance to give out the linen and the plate. The plate-basket would have been a little too heavy for a lady's arm, for on this occasion it was a waggon. As to the tablecloths and napkins, they were brought in on the shoulders of stout porters, in bales. There were enough of those bales to have loaded Whittington's ship without the cats. I promised not to introduce ghosts or anything unpleasant, but I cannot help observing here that a great banquet, whether it be given in the Guildhall or in a front parlour in Twopenny Town, bears a certain resemblance to Death. It is a leveller. The Lord Mayor and Tomkins are equally driven to employ pine-wood trestles and school-forms. Every one, when he gives a very large party, goes beyond the resources of his establishment. So I beg of you not to lift up the cloth to see what it covers, but to have faith that your legs are under mahogany. When the grace has been sung and the covers have been whipped off the turtle tureens, you will be all served the same as regards those great essentials, the victuals. Being at liberty to roam wherever my fancy guides, I observe that all the tables are laid out alike. Two plates, a commensurate number of knives, forks, and glasses, to each person, and a little gilt fruit-stand to every six. The cloth is laid in military order and with military precision. The regiment of waiters advance at the word of command, and execute "plates;" at another word of command they advance and execute "glasses;" at another, "flower-stands;" and so on. A word as to the waiters. The faces of many of them are familiar to me. I have been served by them at all kinds of feasts in all kinds of places. Yonder is a man who at one time has served me with pâté de foi-gras in Belgrave-square, at another has brought me a plate of veal-and-ham-pie at the Crystal Palace, at a third has helped me to boiled leg of mutton and turnips at the periodical suppers of the Slap-Bang Club in Long Acre. I remember he told me once, confidentially, while he was helping me to the 'ock (reduced duty) at a genteel party in Hoxton, that he had a large family, had seen a deal of life, and had once waited at Buckingham Palace. Here is another, who has

retired from my chair in London to answer my call a day or two after in Liverpool; who has sprung up at my side at Inverness, and whom I have found flicking the crumbs from the table of a Fleet-street eating-house on my return, as if he had never left Fleet-street in his life. The ubiquity of waiters is very remarkable. And the contemplation of this characteristic of the tribe leads me to make another sombre remark in spite of myself. How like are waiters to undertakers' men! The same waiters help the rich and the poor alike to live; and the same undertakers help the rich and the poor alike to their graves. —Let me now put the skull out of sight, gild it, and turn it into a drinking-cup.

I pass through the centre of the Hall, ascend a flight of steps, and find myself at what I may call the cross-roads of Guildhall. If I bear to the right, I come to the reception-rooms of the Lady Mayoress; if I turn to the left, I arrive at the kitchens and store-rooms; if I hold straight on, I am beguiled to imagine that I am at Spithead, seeing an iron-clad proceeding to sea. For here there is a "set scene," which the stage carpenter is now hurrying to completion. I turn to the left, and peep into the kitchen and store-rooms. The turtle is already bubbling in a hundred pots, and there are shells enough to furnish a Roman legion with shields. Here is a store-room filled with cakes and jellies, another devoted to fowls and pea-hens and pheasants ready trussed for the spit; a third, a very large apartment, is purple with hundreds of bunches of hothouse grapes. Grapes on the floor, grapes on the chairs, grapes on the tables, grapes on every ledge and shelf. Nothing else showing except the pure white wood on which the luscious fruit is laid. Here is a room that appears to be strewn with ingots of silver and nuggets of gold. Have I strayed into the cellars of the Bank of England, or has the enchanter let me down into the genii's cave? Well, no; it is neither silver nor gold, but something which only silver can buy—the champagnes, regally crowned, of Epernay, of the Veuve Clicquot. Pish! The treasures which Aladdin's lamp revealed were tinsel compared to these. What were his rubies, his diamonds, and pearls (considering how the market must have been overstocked in his part of the country), to the bright bubbling juice of the grape, which is ready at the touch of the pincers to leap forth from those sweet mouths, in sparkling fountains of inspiration! Rub me no lamps after this! Twist me wire, draw me corks! Let Aladdin rub; be mine the pleasant conjuration to cut the twine; let Ali Baba say "Open sesame," the signal of my heart's desire is "pop." Clap on the stone, magician, and keep me here. I don't want to come up and take these jewels to market, I can enjoy them where I am. A flitting thought of the Happy Valley calls to mind the Doctor's resonant locution—the "potentiality of wealth beyond the dreams of avarice." This is not fringe, but what the successful fringe-making will achieve.

Which, you will please to understand, is an allusion to the fact—of which he is justly and honourably proud—that the present Lord Mayor of London is a fringe-maker. Nothing that I saw on this (in my calendar) red-letter day gratified me so much as the honest pride which the Lord Mayor, the aldermen, and all the City magnates, took in the trade and commerce by which they had gained wealth, and attained to eminence among their fellow-citizens. I must be allowed to say this, and I say it from my heart, that a more unaffected, hearty, jolly set of men, I never had the pleasure of meeting—except (I hope the exception will not be resented) among the aristocracy of birth and rank. I had an opportunity, before coming to the Guildhall, of witnessing preparations for certain private festivities, which proved to me that Lord Mayor Phillips was a worthy representative of the old English gentleman who,

> While he feasted all the rich,
> He ne'er forgot the poor.

It was a holiday at the Lord Mayor's warehouse in Newgate-street, and the industrious apprentices, male and female, were busy draping the stairs and walls with flags, and laying out the countless counters, not with fringes and rare fabrics for the inspection of the public, but with a variety of good things to eat and to drink for their own delectation, and in celebration of the high honours to which their master had that day attained. The Lord Mayor himself and his sons were there, taking a lively interest in the preparations, and all thoughts for the grand ceremonies of the Guildhall were postponed until the domestic rejoicings were duly provided for. It was a scene for the pencil of Hogarth. The industrious apprentice had become Lord Mayor of London, and here were all his own industrious apprentices preparing to rejoice in the scene of that industry which had been the stepping-stone to his success. The shelves to-day are laden with sirloins of beef, and savoury pies, and jellies, and fruit, and all sorts of good things. And mind how you kick under the counters! You will not kick sleeping apprentices here, but you may break champagne-bottles. They are going to feast here in style, I can tell you. I am loth to tear myself away. I should like to remain and celebrate the occasion with the apprentices.

To return to the Guildhall. In my absence the waiters have executed several more manœuvres. Pine-apples have taken up position, sponge-cakes and jellies are in rank, front and rear, and pigeon and grouse pies have formed square, to resist the heaviest and hungriest knife-and-fork squadrons. Two pulpits have been erected, one on each side of the principal entrance to the Hall. Is the Archbishop of Canterbury going to ask a blessing from one, and the Archbishop of York to return thanks from the other? I am about to make inquiries, when I am summoned to breakfast. The scene of the refection is one of the council chambers. The

guests are aldermen, common councilmen, members of the Lord Mayor's committee, and the present chronicler. When I had breakfasted, I was at liberty to saunter about again, and wandering from room to room among workmen still hurrying to and fro with flower-pots, and pictures, and statues, and articles of furniture, I completely lost my topographical bearings, and became a mere piece of human flotsam. On the strange shores on which I was cast up, I saw many remarkable things. I think I must have touched the West Indies, for one island was covered with pine-apples; another, which glowed with golden pippins, was no doubt the Hesperides. At Dorking, I found all the fowls dead, with their legs turned up in the air; and there was a strange country where the birds had no feathers, but only a rosette of white ribbon in their tails, to fly with. There was an additional peculiarity about these birds. They carried their heads under one wing, and their livers under the other. When, at last, I was cast up in a place where there was a picture of Queen Caroline, I was recalled to the knowledge that I was still in England, and somewhere very close to Guildhall in the city of London. Where else but in this stronghold of sturdy sentiment and honest fair play, would they have hung up a portrait of Queen Caroline in one of their best rooms?

Every time I turn into the great hall, I find that the army has executed another manœuvre; and the field of the cloth of damask is almost fully marshalled with all the pièces de résistance, large and small. I distinctly heard a table groan, and six waiters hearing it too, went and shored it up, and told it to keep quiet. I wonder what those two pulpits are for—can they be——?

"Lunch is ready, sir?"

I am carried off to more eating and drinking, and the mystery of those pulpits is still unexplained. I am ushered into a small apartment which is crowded with aldermen, and sheriffs, and chaplains, and legal dignitaries in wigs. I am the only person in mufti, and I feel that I ought to have a gown, or a gold chain, or a wig, or something to entitle me to be where I am. But the civic dignitaries don't appear to think me in the way, and don't look "who the deuce are you?" at me, and by many kind attentions I am encouraged to feel that I am a civic dignitary myself. We wait a little time, when suddenly there enters the well-known gentleman in the fur cap, who carries the sword; also, the other equally well-known gentleman, who carries the mace. Behind them follows a gentleman usher with a white wand, who announces the Right Honourable the Lord Mayor, who appears for the first time in the state robes of his office. If you ask me how he looked, I answer that he looked jolly, There was a hearty shaking of hands all round. many bluff congratulations were interchanged, some jokes were passed, and then without ceremony, or order of our going, we trooped out into another apartment to lunch. It was a plain substantial feast of roast beef and boiled potatoes. I did not think I wanted any lunch, but I was told by an experienced person that the procession was a trying ordeal, and that I had better "lay in a good solid foundation." So I accepted the seat that was kindly offered to me by the Lord Mayor, and fell to. I should have thought that his Lordship would have been too much occupied thinking about all he had to go through, not to mention the speeches he had to make, to take any notice of me, or anybody else. But no, his dignity and his duties sat lightly upon him; and I say again, he was jolly. He asked me to take wine, he asked me to join him in a loving and warming cup of hot elder wine, to keep out the cold—for "I should find it very chilly in the carriage." He was collected enough and thoughtful enough to remember that the cavalry officers had ridden all the way from Hounslow that morning, to command his bodyguard, and sent out for them to share in the feast. The young swell in the red coat, who sat next to me, said he never was so thankful for a slice of beef in his life. "And wasn't the Lord Mayor a brick for thinking of them?" If we could only have stopped round this lunch-table, I am sure we should have spent a very pleasant afternoon. A little longer, and we should have got poking each other in the ribs, telling each other our family affairs, and inviting each other to dinner at our respective family mansions. But the sword of the Damocles in the fur cap was imminent over us, and when the sword pointed the way, we had to follow.

All the persons about to figure in the procession are assembled in the outer hall, where they hang, with coachmen and footmen, on the stairs, until the City Marshal—who appears to be the twelve-foot model of all the military heroes whose portraits we see in Freemasons' Halls—shall have arranged some little matters of precedence. I have an opportunity here of inspecting the Lord Mayor's six footmen, who are just putting the finishing touch to their new and really handsome light blue and gold liveries, by pinning on to each other's breasts white favours as large as the crown of my hat. They are all very proper and tall young men, and I am pleased to see that they are exceedingly nervous, as becomes modest worth, sensible of the responsibilities of a high occasion. It struck me that I had never detected Jeames of Berkeley-square exhibiting any nervousness on any occasion, but rather that I had always found him resolutely determined to swell out his breast, bend out his calves, turn up his nose, and look coldly and majestically down upon everybody, his master included. It struck me, too, that the Lord Mayor's footmen were the sort of modest, right-minded young men who would take a shilling in the spirit in which it was introduced; and being satisfied of this, I did not think it necessary to put them to the test.

F. M. Anak, of the Anakim, marshalled us very speedily, and having been taken charge of by Mr. Common Serjeant, who is good enough to supplement the favour of representing me in

parliament, by giving me a seat in his carriage, I find myself, much to the hurt of my modesty, taking the pas of the Aldermen, the Sheriffs, and the Lord Mayor himself.

And now for the next three or four hours, so far as I have any personal observation of what is going on, Mr. Common Serjeant and your humble, but on this occasion highly dignified, servant, are the heroes of the day, the sight which the multitude have come out to see, the cynosure of millions of eyes. There is a mounted brass band before us; there is a mounted brass band behind us; there is a policeman at each window, and two troopers, with drawn swords in their hands, are making their chargers whisk the people back with their tails. Once more I feel that I ought to have a gown, or a gold chain, or a wig, for the people are all craning their necks to look at me and muttering; and I am afraid that what they are saying is not respectful. Luckily I cannot hear them for the bang of the drums and the fanfare of the trumpets. Do you want to know what it is to ride in a procession and be stared at by a million of people, with drums beating, and trumpets blaring, and horses prancing, and sabres gleaming? I will tell you. It was like going out to sea in a boat for the first time. I wasn't used to it; I wasn't sure about the safety of the thing; I wasn't comfortable. I felt my heart beating rather faster than usual. It wasn't pride. To put it mildly, I will say nervousness. When I saw how the streets were packed with human beings, that the very walls of the houses were stuccoed over with faces, leaving nothing visible but living and breathing humanity, as if the town were built of men, women, and children, instead of bricks,—when I had contemplated this marvellous sight for some time, I was struck with a grotesque thought of Pharaoh passing through the Red Sea. I will say that Mr. Common Serjeant is Pharaoh, I am his prime minister, and here we are passing through the divided waters of humanity. I am in morbid terror—the word is out, I can't help it—of the fate of Pharaoh, and that the parted waters of humanity will meet and swamp us. I get used to it by-and-by, however—as what will not a man get used to? talk about the eels!—and conceive the horrid design of looking out for my friends, and astonishing their weak minds with a sight of myself figuring in the Lord Mayor's Show! I am speedily enabled to carry my design into execution. I see a friend at a window. He sees me; he falls back as if he were shot! I am seen by many friends, and this is, in every case, the effect I have upon them. Each one falls back with a gasp, as if pierced in a vital part by a bullet. But it is when I am seen of my enemies that I have my greatest triumph. Their vanity makes them forget for a moment that I am their enemy, and they are my enemies; and, just to show their friends that they know somebody who is hand in glove with the Lord Mayor, they make me a bow. I need not say that I treat them with triumphant contempt. A publisher of mine saw me, and I made a note to ask for more money for my next literary performance. I feel satisfied in considering that I have got it. I count the increase beforehand.

Being *inside* the Show, of course I cannot tell you how it looked *outside*, but all whom I have heard express an opinion, say that it was the most orderly and dignified procession that has been seen for many years. I was assured before starting that this was certain to be the case, as the Lord Mayor had courageously determined to dispense with the men in armour, whose habit of getting drunk and tumbling off their horses had, on previous occasions, seriously interfered with the solemn course of the pageant. As the cits don't like anything which savours of saving money on this occasion, his Lordship conciliated the prejudice, by spending the cash which the men in armour usually cost in decorating the Guildhall with flowers and shrubs, which were certainly a deal prettier and a deal sweeter than encased troopers redolent of rum.

In about two hours from the time of starting, we arrive at Westminster Hall, where the civic dignitaries, in their silk stockings and their court pumps, are kept standing on the historic, but cold, flags longer than there seems any necessity for. On squeezing up the stairs leading to the courts (at the tail of the dignitaries, who are awfully hustled), I find that the delay and obstruction have been caused by Mr. Briefless, who is here in full force. The whole Briefless family are here, all in their wigs and gowns, put on simply as an excuse for being present in the best places in the Court of Exchequer during the presentation of the Lord Mayor to the Barons. I was really pleased to see Tom and Jack Briefless in full forensic fig; for I thought, to be sure, they had got briefs at last; but the way that Tom put his tongue in his cheek when I asked him, convinced me that the "cause" of his being there was not on the list. I thought the Barons in their scarlet gowns, ermine collars, and flowing wigs, looked very grand and imposing. I have seen very few dignitaries in their robes of office, seated in their chairs of state, who did not remind me of supers at the theatre. Even the Speaker of the House of Commons, as I have before observed in this Journal, is apt to call to my mind Mr. C. J. Smith trying Janet Pride at the Adelphi. But the Barons of the Exchequer provoked no such comparisons, except as regards one very jolly-looking Baron, who was, in face and the twinkle of his eye, exceedingly like Mr. Paul Bedford. But certainly the Barons of the Exchequer were awe-inspiring, and one could not but be respectful, in thought as well as in demeanour, in their presence. The manner in which the Chief Baron delivered his address to the Lord Mayor was exceedingly dignified. He sat in his chair all the while, with his hands laid one upon the other, and bowed his head gracefully to point his remarks. It was quite regal. I am not very sure what the ceremony

was, for the Briefless family blocked up my view; but I think the Lord Mayor and Sheriffs, if not sworn, were in some way invested with their office, and I distinctly saw Tom Briefless start and turn pale when the Lord Chief Baron invested a good-looking Sheriff with the power of arresting and keeping in custody all such persons as the courts might decree judgment against.

From the Court of Exchequer, the civic dignitaries trooped away into another, to pay their respects to the judges; but I was not able to follow immediately for the Briefless family, who always stopped the way.

By-and-by I step into the carriage with Mr. Common Serjeant, and away we go again, with See the conquering hero, which I feel refers to myself and my learned friend, and Rule, Britannia, Britannia (with big drum emphasis), Britannia rules the waves (cymbals), and a row and a row and a row dow-dow, and the Bri—tish Gren—a—diers. Ear-piercing pipes, clash, jerk, bang, hurrah!—British constitution, rights, and liberties, bulwarks, Magna Charta, Temple Bar, Bow-bells, Wat Tyler, Domine dirige, Gog and Magog, glory, liberty, fraternity, and festivity, hurrah! Before I descend from my chariot at Charing-cross (where I fly from the intoxicating scene to prepare for another intoxicating scene, the banquet), let me make one little remark, with regard to the apparent condition of the people who thronged the streets. The majority belonged to the poorer classes; but during the whole journey from the City to Westminster, where I must have passed in review at least half a million of people, I did not observe one single person who was not comfortably dressed and decently shod. I looked hard for a person without a shoe to his foot, or a coat to his back, but I could not see one. I saw nothing to shock the feelings of a person who was riding in a luxurious carriage, and was presently going to feast upon all the delicacies of the season. It was not a cold, shivering mob; it was a warm, comfortable mob. It was not a hungry-looking mob. It had either had its dinner, or was going to have it when the show passed. There was no sign of anxiety as regards victuals. I am not going to argue that there are no poor, destitute, hungry, miserable creatures in London; I merely make a note of the general aspect of this great mob as it appeared to a not unattentive observer. I leave conclusions to be drawn by others.

The Banquet! A few minutes before six, my chariot (two red wheels picked out with black, driver sits behind, coat of arms a crown, *or*, and the legend in Arabic, 13,076) sets me down at the grand entrance of the Guildhall. I present a card like an illuminated panel—probably on the model of Gog and Magog's cards, and an emphatic rebuke to the "no cards" of the shabby world more to the west—and am bidden to enter. Chaos has given place to order. The halls and corridors are neatly draped, the pictures are hung, the statues have taken up their places, the flowers and shrubs have been tastefully disposed around them, the gas is lighted, and the stage is clear to begin. Everything has "come all right at night," as it always miraculously does, spite of the morning appearances to the contrary. I pass up the grand corridor through a grove of red, white, and blue, reminding me that Britannia is the pride of the ocean, the home of the brave and the free. I enter the grand hall. The last manœuvre has been executed. The Field of the Cloth of Damask is duly arranged and set out, and only awaits the assemblage of the valiant knights and ladies fair. A splendid, gorgeous, dazzling scene, but I am not permitted to pause and admire. I am again on the point of asking what those two pulpits are for, when I am hurried onwards by the crowd. Up a flight of steps, through a crush room, up more steps, sharply to the left, and I am in for it. "Your card, sir?" I give it, and then, in tones of thunder:

"The Honourable Mr. All-the-Year-Round!"

The Honourable Mr. A.Y.R. approaches a dais, on which are standing the Lord Mayor, the Lady Mayoress, and their pretty daughter. He bows, receives a pleasant recognition from the Lord Mayor, and is thus fortified for an effective backing out of the presence. Having myself safely passed through a trying ordeal (which took me unawares), I proceed to the bottom of the stairs, and take a cold-blooded delight in watching others. The *very* grand folks are coming now, and their arrival is announced by blast of trumpet. Standing here at the foot of the staircase, where a policeman on duty, with a raised pie, a pheasant, a jelly, and a dish of grapes under his nose, is suffering the tortures of Tantalus, I see them all as they pass up, and note how they are received.

"The Right Honourable Earl Russell!"

Cheers and a thunder-clap of applause.

"The Chancellor of the Exchequer!"

More cheers, and another thunder-clap of applause.

The cabinet ministers come in official uniform—blue coat with a great deal of collar—the judges in their scarlet gowns, wigs, and square black caps, suggestive partly of college, and partly of passing sentence, and a few public functionaries appear in court dress, one of the most distinguished-looking personages being Sir Thomas Henry, the chief magistrate, whose suit is of black velvet. And for an hour and more the trumpets continue to sound, and the distinguished guests, male and female, continue to pass onwards, in a glittering stream, towards the reception-room. Dazed by the ever-shifting kaleidoscope, and almost blinded by the blaze of diamonds, I seek to relieve my eyes by turning them upon the two pulpits, which have so deeply excited my curiosity. At that very moment, four strong men were placing Bibles upon the cushions. They lay the huge books back upwards, and I am still more curious. Presently, two persons ascend. They wear no gowns. Are they of the dissenting persuasion? They turn up their cuffs. Are they muscular Christians going

The pulpit drum ecclesiastic
To beat with a fist instead of a stick.

No, they are carvers, and the big Bibles, back upwards, are barons of beef!

All the trumpets are sounding at once, the guests are settling into their places, and the singers in the gallery are clearing their throats to sing grace. At the first note, five hundred people who have sat down prematurely get up again simultaneously, and the effect is curious. Their simultaneous sitting down, when the grace has been sung, is equally curious, and I should like them to do it again. I am not at all eager for the turtle, you perceive. The fact is, the extraordinary splendour of the scene, the majestic grandeur of the Hall, the long vista of gaily-dressed guests resembling parterres of flowers, the glitter of the gold and silver plate, and the star-like effect of the lamps, have so lapped up my finer sense, that my grosser appetite is submerged and forgotten. My wildest fancy, stimulated by the Arabian Nights, has never imagined anything more gorgeous, more splendid, more fairy-like. What the Guildhall was like on these occasions before it was restored and beautified, I cannot say.

If I had not, with the corner of my eye, detected a young man fishing out from the tureen all the pieces of green fat for his own plate, it is probable that my trance would have lasted until the turtle had been removed. But seeing this, I spake, and demanded turtle. I had it—twice. Not polite to ask for soup twice; but can't help it; besides, rather enjoy spiting that greedy young man. Don't believe any one who tells you that you don't get hot things at the Lord Mayor's banquet. The turtle was hot, the pea-hen was hot, the guinea-fowl was hot, the potatoes were hot—and floury. I had so many hot and nice things that I quite forgot to ask for a slice of the baron of beef. I could not have had a daintier, better served, dinner if I had specially ordered it for four, of Gunter. As to drinkables, I had cold punch with the turtle, and champagne with the pea-hen, and Madeira with the guinea-fowl, and hock with the partridge-pie, and port with the cheese, and sherry with the Nesselrode pudding, and claret with the filberts, and I might have had beer, had I been disposed towards that beverage, which I wasn't.

Towards the close of the feast, when the Lord Mayor and the gentlemen at the head of the table were beginning to look thoughtfully towards the cloth, and nervously pick threads from it, as if they expected to find ideas in the warp and words in the woof, I am favoured by one of the Lord Mayor's sons (to whom I take this opportunity of tendering my warmest thanks for many hearty attentions) with an admission to the gallery. From this elevated position, at the end of the Hall, seated upon Magog's toes, I am enabled to view the building and the assembled company from a coigne of vantage which has no excelsior except the crown of Magog's head. Here, too, I listen to the speeches as well as I can, but the only speakers I am able to hear are the Lord Mayor and the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whose every word, even at this distance, is distinctly audible. I wonder if anybody ever before sat upon Magog's left foot and made a dessert-table of his pedestal! There is a very secure and convenient place for a bottle of champagne behind the tip of his wooden sword—nobody can see it from the front—and the hollow of his foot affords an ample place of concealment for a dish of almonds and raisins. I saw something behind Magog—but there, I mustn't betray his secret; it would be shabby, considering the intimacy he admitted me to.

Here I sat, with a friend, listening to the murmur of inaudible speakers and the ringing notes of very audible singers (notably Mademoiselle Leibhart: though why she should think the Cuckoo suitable to the occasion I can't imagine), until the figures in the kaleidoscope begin to drop out, and the blaze of shifting colours grows thinner and fainter; and as the scene gradually fades out before us, my friend and I grow philosophical, and moralise about life and the vanities of the world—not forgetting that there is some champagne left in the bottle—finally coming to the conclusion, by a process of reasoning which I am unable now to trace, that it is a fine thing to have plenty of money, and be able to have real turtle and guinea-fowl for dinner, and ride home in our own chariot instead of the hack cab to which our Alnaschar's vision is now melting.

HALF A MILLION OF MONEY.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "BARBARA'S HISTORY."

CHAPTER LXXXII. ON GUARD.

Saxon was fixed in his determination not to have recourse to the law. In vain the banker entreated permission to call in the aid of Mr. Nicodemus Kidd; in vain represented the urgency of the case, the magnitude of the stakes, and the difficulty—it might almost be said, the impossibility—of doing anything really effectual in their own unassisted persons. To all this, Saxon only replied that there were but three surviving Trefaldens, and, happen what might, he would not disgrace that old Cornish name by dragging his cousin before a public tribunal. This was his stand-point, and nothing could move him from it.

A little after midnight the banker left him, and, repairing straight to Pentonville, roused the virtuous Keckwitch from his first sleep, and sat with him in strict council for more than an hour and a half. By three o'clock, he was back again in Saxon's chambers; and by five, ere the first grey of the misty September morning was visible overhead, the two young men had alighted from a cab at the top of Slade's-lane, and were briskly patrolling the deserted pavement.

Dawn came, and then day. The shabby suburban sparrows woke up in their nesting-places,

and, after much preliminary chirruping, came down and hopped familiarly in the path of the watchers. Presently a sweep went by with his brushes over his shoulder, and was followed by three or four labourers, going to their work in the neighbouring cabbage-gardens. Then a cart rumbled along the High-street; then three or four in succession; and after that the tide of wheels set fairly in, and never ceased. By-and-by, when the policeman at the corner had almost grown tired of keeping his eye upon them, and the young men themselves had begun to weary of this fruitless tramping to and fro, they were unexpectedly joined by Mr. Keckwitch.

"Beg your pardon, gentlemen," said he, "but I thought I'd best come over. Two heads, you know, are better than one, and maybe three are better than two. Anyhow, here I am."

Whereupon the head clerk, who was quite out of breath from fast walking, took off his hat and dabbed his forehead with his blue cotton pocket-handkerchief. Respectable as he was, Saxon regarded the man with inexpressible aversion. To him, Mr. Abel Keckwitch was simply a spy and an informer; and spies and informers, according to Saxon's creed, scarcely came within the pale of humanity.

"Of course, gentlemen, you've seen nothin' as yet," pursued the head clerk, when he had recovered breath. "Not likely. About eight o'clock, or from eight to half-past, will be about the time to look out. Most of the expresses start towards nine, you see, and he's safe to be off by one of 'em. Now, I've got a cab waitin' round the corner, and all we shall have to do will be to watch him out of the house, jump in, and follow."

"Keckwitch thinks of everything," said Greatorex, approvingly.

"The main question is, where's he a-goin' to? I say America."

"America, of course."

"Well, then, you see he might start from the London Docks, or Southampton, or Glasgow, or Liverpool; but most likely Liverpool. Now, there ain't no boat either to-day or to-morrow from either of those ports—that I've ascertained; but then he's safe to get away somehow, and keep quiet till the chance turns up. He might catch up the Liverpool boat, you know, at Kingstown, or the Southampton boat at Havre. In short, we must be prepared for him everywhere, and keep our eyes open all round."

"Yours seem all right, Keckwitch, at any rate," said the banker.

"Well, sir, I ain't closed 'em for one half minute since you were at Pentonville," replied Mr. Keckwitch, complacently. "One needs to be especial watchful, having no professionals to help us forward."

At this moment the church clock began striking eight, and the postman made his appearance at the upper end of Slade's-lane. The head clerk at once disengaged himself from the group, and, desiring his fellow-watchers to keep aloof, began sauntering up and down, within a few yards of the gates of Elton House. Presently the postman crossed over, letters in hand, and rang the gate bell. Mr. Keckwitch was at his elbow in a moment.

"Can you tell me, postman," said he, blandly, "if there's any party of the name of Henley residin' in this street?"

"Henley?" repeated the letter-carrier. "No, not that I know of. There's a Henry in Silver-street, if that's what you mean."

But that was not at all what Mr. Keckwitch meant. Mr. Keckwitch only meant to read the address upon the letter in the postman's hand, and having done so hastened back to Saxon and Greatorex at the bottom of the street.

"By the Lord, gentlemen," he exclaimed, striking his clenched fist against his open palm, "he's off!"

"Off!" repeated Saxon and Greatorex, in one breath.

"Ay. I saw his writin' on the envelope. It's one of our office envelopes, and has been posted in a pillar-box overnight. He's off, and we might dodge about here till doomsday for all the good we could do by it."

"He has secured two hours' start, too, curse him," said Greatorex, fiercely.

"Curse him, with all my heart," echoed the head clerk, fervently.

CHAPTER LXXXIII. A TENDER EPISODE.

Mr. Keckwitch rang boldly at the gate of Elton House, and requested to see Mrs. Filmer. Mrs. Filmer was Madame Duvernay's serious housekeeper. The head clerk, for prudential reasons, had never ventured to call upon her before; but the time for prudence was now gone by, and the time for boldness was come.

There was an air of flurry and confusion about the place, which Mr. Keckwitch detected as soon as he set foot across madame's threshold. The servant who admitted him had a scared look upon her face, and, having shown him to the door of the housekeeper's room, scampered away again as fast as her legs could carry her. Presently a bell was rung violently up-stairs, and was followed by a sound of running feet and rustling skirts along the passage. Then came an interval of dead silence, and by-and-by Mrs. Filmer made her appearance with her handkerchief to her eyes.

"Oh, Mr. Jennings," she said, "you come at a sad moment, sir. We are in terrible trouble here this morning."

The head clerk, who had introduced himself to Mrs. Filmer in one of those church-going conversations by the unassuming name of Jennings, here pressed the housekeeper's hand in both of his own, and replied that he was sorry for anything which made her unhappy.

Mrs. Filmer then went on to say that madam had just received the cruelest letter from master. Master had actually gone away, nobody knew where, without even bidding madam good-

bye, and as good as told her, in plain black and white, that he should never come back again. Madam had been in hysterics ever since. Poor madam! Such a kind, dear, sweet-natured lady, too but there, what could one expect? Men were such brutes.

"Not all men, my dear Mrs. Filmer," wheezed the head clerk, tenderly reproachful.

Whereupon Mrs. Filmer tossed her head, and believed that there wasn't so much difference between the best and the worst, as some folks imagined.

"There's myself, for instance," said Mr. Keckwitch. "I abhor perfidy; I do, indeed, ma'am."

"Ah, so you say, Mr. Jennings," sighed the housekeeper.

"Ill prove it to you, Mrs. Filmer. If you'll get me a sight of that letter, so that I could examine the writin' and postmark, I'll go down at once to the City, and push inquiry in certain quarters that I know of; and if I don't succeed in findin' out which way your scamp of a master's gone, I give you leave never to speak to me again."

"Oh, Mr. Jennings, do you really mean that?"

"Mean it, ma'am? Bless you! this sort of thing is all in my way. Many and many's the runaway bankrupt we've caught just as he was steppin' aboard of the steamer that was to carry him to Boulogne or New York. Do you think you can put your hand on the letter?"

"I think so. It was lying on the floor just now, down by madam's bedside, and a bank-note for five hundred pounds as well, which I picked up and put in her purse. She didn't regard the money, poor soul."

"Women never do," said the head clerk. "Their little hearts are so tender."

Mrs. Filmer looked down, and sighed again.

"I'm sure yours is. I *hope* it is, my dear," added he; and, sidling a step nearer, that respectable man actually kissed her.

About ten minutes later, Mr. Keckwitch came out from the gates of Elton House, radiant with triumph. He had William Trefalden's letter in his pocket-book. It contained only these words:

"Adieu, Thérèse. Circumstances over which I have no control compel me to leave England —perhaps, for ever. I bid you farewell with tender regret. Try to think of me kindly, and believe that, if you knew all, you would not blame me for the step which I now find myself compelled to take. I enclose a Bank of England note for five hundred pounds. The house, and all that it contains, is yours. Once more, farewell. May you be happier in the future than I have made you in the past.

"W. Trefalden."

CHAPTER LXXXIV. IS IT A TRAP?

They went first of all to the office in Chancery-lane, where they found the clerks just settling to their work, and the housemaid blacking the grate in William Trefalden's private room. To put a summary stop to this damsel's proceedings, dismiss her, lock the door, and institute a strict but rapid investigation of all that the place contained, was their next course. They examined the contents of the waste-paper basket, turned out the table-drawers, broke open the safe; but found nothing of any value or importance.

"Look here," said Saxon, presently. "What is this?"

It was only a crumpled envelope, the inside of which was covered with pencilled memoranda.

Greatorex uttered a cry of triumph.

"A sketch of his route, by Heaven!" he exclaimed. "Where did you find this?"

"On the mantelshelf here, beside the almanack."

"Listen: 'London to Boulogne by steamer—three A.M. Eight hours. Boulogne to Paris—eleven A.M. Paris to Marseilles—8. 40, through. Marseilles to Algiers, nine P.M. Or Constantinople, five P.M.'"

"Is that all?" asked Mr. Keckwitch.

"All—and he was off of course, by the early Boulogne boat by three this morning. Eight hours' passage—confound him! he will be landing in half an hour; and by six or seven this evening will be in Paris, whence he will go straight through to Marseilles by that eight-forty express."

"The eight-forty express reaches Marseilles at three forty-five the following afternoon," said Mr. Keckwitch, who had wisely provided himself with a continental time-table.

"And the next through train from London?" asked Greatorex.

"Half-past eight this evenin'."

The banker uttered an angry oath; but Mr. Keckwitch only took up the envelope, and examined it thoughtfully.

"I shall not attempt to overtake him," said Saxon. "He has seventeen hours' start. It would be sheer folly."

"If you would but consent to telegraph to the police at Paris," began the banker—but Saxon silenced him with a gesture.

"No," he said, resolutely. "Nothing shall induce me to do that. Once for all, I will not deal with him as with a felon."

"Gentlemen," said Mr. Keckwitch, still examining the envelope, "I'm not sure that this paper ain't just a trap."

"A trap?"

The head clerk nodded.

"He's such a clever chap," said he. "Too clever by half to commit a blunder of this sort. I no more believe he's gone by that Boulogne boat, than I believe he's gone to Paradise."

"Where, then, do you suppose he *is* gone?" said the banker, impatiently.

"Likely enough that he ain't left London at all. And, somehow or another, I have my doubts"

"Doubts of what?"

Mr. Keckwitch rubbed his fat hands over and over, and wagged his head knowingly before replying.

"That, maybe, there's a woman in the case."

The banker laughed outright at the absurdity of this notion; but over Saxon's mind there flashed a sudden, strange suspicion—a suspicion so vivid, that it stood to him for a conviction; a conviction so startling, that it came to him like a revelation.

Helen Rivière!

The name almost escaped his lips, with the shock of discovery. He saw the whole plot now—saw it as plainly as if his cousin's secret soul had been laid bare before him. His course was taken on the instant. With conviction came decision; with quick sight, prompt action.

"I have changed my mind," he said. "I will pursue the search. I am willing to employ any means, short of bringing my cousin before a court of justice. Tell me what is best to be done, and I will do it."

His resolute tone took them by surprise.

"Come," said Greatorex, "this is common sense."

But Saxon, who had been all irresolution up to this moment, was now all impatience.

"For Heaven's sake," he exclaimed, "let us lose no more time in talking! Moments are precious. What is to be done?"

"Well, sir, in the first place," replied Mr. Keckwitch, "you must give private employment to three or four sharp fellows. My friend, Mr. Kidd, will know where to find 'em for you."

"Good. Go on."

"One must search in and about London; one must go upon this foreign track, just for safety; and one must run down to Liverpool, with instructions to cross to Kingston, if he sees cause to do so."

"Yes, yes. Go on."

"And you must offer a fair reward."

"How much?"

"Well, sir, would you think a couple of hundred too much?"

"I will make it a couple of thousand."

"Bravo!" cried Greatorex. "For two thousand pounds these detective fellows would find you the bones of Adam and Eve."

"Say you so? Then it shall be five thousand. Mr. Keckwitch, I authorise you to offer a reward of five thousand pounds in my name."

The head clerk bowed down before Saxon as if he had been a demi-god, and said that it should be done forthwith.

"I'll go myself with the fellow who takes the Paris job," said Mr. Greatorex. "I shall enjoy the excitement of the thing; and you, Trefalden, had better go to Liverpool."

Saxon shook his head,

"No," he said, "my field shall be London."

CHAPTER LXXXV. SAXON TAKES HIS OWN COURSE.

"MAYBE there's a woman in the case."

Those words caused Saxon to fling himself heart and soul into the pursuit. They roused all the will and energy that were in him. It was but a random guess of Mr. Keckwitch's, after all; but it did what the loss of two millions of money had failed to do.

The more he thought of it, the more probable—the more terribly probable—it seemed. So young, so lovely, so fresh to the world as Helen Rivière was, what more likely than that William Trefalden should desire to have her for his own? What more likely than that she, being so poor and so friendless, should accept him? She would be certain to do so, if only for her mother's sake. For Saxon did not now believe that Mrs. Rivière was dead. As he had once trusted his cousin with an infinite trust, he now regarded his every word and deed with unbounded suspicion. He neither believed that Mrs. Rivière was dead, nor that Helen was gone to Florence, nor that any statement that William Trefalden had ever made to him at any time was other than deliberately and blackly false.

Granting, however, that Mrs. Rivière might be no more—and it was, after all, sufficiently likely to be true—would not the lonely girl cling to whoever was nearest and kindest to her at the time? And then Saxon remembered how gentlemanly, how gracious, how persuasive his cousin could be; how sweet his smile was, how pleasant and low his voice!

Poor Helen! Poor, pretty, trustful, gentle Helen! What a fate for her! It made his heart ache and his blood boil, and brought to the surface all that was tenderest and manliest in his nature only to think of it.

Within five minutes after he had announced his decision, the three men parted at the door of William Trefalden's office. Each went his separate way—Keckwitch to engage the detectives, Greatorex to make arrangements for his temporary absence, and Saxon to pursue his own quest according to his own plan.

He went straight to Brudenell-terrace, Camberwell, and inquired for Miss Rivière.

The belligerent maid-servant reconnoitred through a couple of inches of open doorway before replying.

"Miss Rivers don't live here now," she said, sharply.

This, however, was only what Saxon had expected to hear.

"Can you oblige me, then," he said, "with her present address?"

"No, I can't."

"But surely Miss Rivière must have left an address when she removed from here?"

"There was an address left," replied the girl; "but it ain't right, so it's of no use to any one."

"How do you know that it is not right?"

"Because it's been tried, of course. But I can't stand here all day."

And the girl made as if she was about to shut the door in Saxon's face; but, seeing his fingers on their way to his waistcoat-pocket, relented. He placed a sovereign in her hand.

"I want to know all that you can tell me on this subject," he said.

She looked at the coin and at him, and shook her head suspiciously.

"What's this for?" she said.

"For your information. I would not mind what I gave to any one who could put me in the way of finding where those ladies are gone."

"But I can't tell you what I don't know."

"That's true; but you may as well tell me all you do."

The girl, still looking at him somewhat doubtfully, invited him to step inside the passage.

"I can show you the card," she said; "but I know it's of no use. There was a gentleman here the other day—he came from a great London shop, and would have put pounds and pounds of painting in Miss Rivers's way—and though he wrote it all down exact, he couldn't find the place."

And with this she plunged into the little empty front parlour, and brought out a card on which were pencilled, in William Trefalden's own hand, the following words:

Mrs. Rivière,

Beaufort Villa, St. John's Wood.

Saxon almost started on seeing his cousin's well-known hand.

"Who wrote this?" he asked, quickly.

"It was Mr. Forsyth that wrote it, after the ladies were in the cab."

"Mr. Forsyth?" he repeated.

And then the girl, grown suddenly communicative, went on to say that Mr. Forsyth was a rich gentleman who, having known "Mr. Rivers" a great many years ago, had sought the ladies out, paid enormous prices for Mr. Rivers's pictures, and induced Mrs. and Miss Rivers to remove to a pleasanter part of London. Even in this matter he took all the trouble off their hands, and they never so much as saw their new lodgings before he came to take them there. There never was such a kind, thoughtful, pleasant gentleman, to be sure! As for the address, Mrs. Rivers never thought of it till just at the last moment, and then Mr. Forsyth wrote it out as he stood in the passage—the ladies being already in the fly, and ready to drive off.

"And that is all you know about it?" asked Saxon, still turning the card over and over.

"Every word."

"I suppose I may keep the card?"

"Oh yes, if you like; but you'll find there's no such place."

"Did Mrs. Rivière seem to be much worse before she left here?"

"No. We thought she was better, and so did Miss Rivers."

Saxon turned reluctantly towards the door.

"Thank you," he said. "I wish you could have told me more."

"I suppose you are a friend of the family?" said the girl, inquisitively.

Saxon nodded.

"You—you can't tell me, I suppose, whether Mr."

"Forsyth?"

"Ay—whether Mr. Forsyth was engaged to Miss Rivière?" said he, with some hesitation.

She screwed her mouth up, and jerked her head expressively.

"They weren't when they left here," she replied; "but anybody could see how it would be before long."

Then, seeing the trouble in the young man's face, she added quickly:

"On his side, you know. He worshipped the ground Miss Rivers walked upon; but I don't believe she cared a brass farthing for him."

To which Saxon only replied by thanking her again, and then turned despondingly away.

He would go to St. John's Wood; but he felt beforehand that it would be useless. It was to be expected that William Trefalden would give a false address. It was, of course, a part of his plan to do so.

In the midst of these reflections, just as he had reached the further end of the terrace, the girl came running after him.

"Sir, sir," she said, breathlessly, "I've just thought of Doctor Fisher. He was Mrs. Rivers's doctor, and he'll be sure to know where they went."

"God bless you for that thought, my girl!" said Saxon. "Where does he live?"

"I don't know; but it's somewhere about Camberwell. You'll be sure to find him."

"Yes, yes—easily." And again Saxon dipped his fingers into his waistcoat-pocket. But the girl shook her head.

"Lord love you!" said she, "I don't want any more of your money—you've given me too much already!"

And with this she laughed, and ran away.

Saxon jumped back into his cab, and desired to be driven to the first chemist's shop on the road.

"For the chemists," muttered he to himself as he rattled along, "are sure to know all about the doctors."

CHAPTER LXXXVI. DOCTOR FISHER.

Doctor Fisher dwelt in a big, stucco-fronted, many-windowed house, with gates and a portico—a strictly professional-looking house that stood back from the road, as if with a sulky sense of its own superiority to the humbler dwellings round about—a house before whose grim portals no organ-boy would presume to linger, and no Punch to set up his temporary stage. A solemn-looking servant in a sad-coloured livery opened the door, and ushered Saxon to the physician's presence.

Dr. Fisher was a massive man, with an important manner, and a deep rolling voice like the pedal pipes of an organ. He received his visitor courteously, begged him to be seated, and replied clearly and readily to all Saxon's inquiries. Mrs. Rivière was indeed dead. She died about a fortnight before, and was buried in Norwood cemetery. The Rivières had removed from Camberwell about two, or it might be nearly three, months previous to this catastrophe. During the first six or eight weeks of her sojourn at Sydenham, Mrs. Rivière had gained strength, and was so far improved as to be on the point of undertaking a voyage to Madeira,

when she unfortunately took that cold which resulted in her death. Dr. Fisher did not attend Mrs. Rivière's funeral. He believed that Miss Rivière and Mr. Forsyth were the only mourners. He had never had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Forsyth, but he had heard both Mrs. and Miss Rivière make frequent reference to him, as a friend to whom they were bound by many ties of gratitude and regard. Miss Rivière, he believed, was well. He had called upon her in the morning of the day following that on which her mother was buried; but not since. Her present address was Beulah Villa, Sydenham. He regretted that he had no further information to offer; protested that he was entirely at his visitor's service; and wished him a gracious "good morning."

Ushered out again by the solemn lacquey, Saxon pushed on at once to Sydenham.

Beulah Villa proved to be one of a series of semi-detached houses in a quiet side-road overlooking some fields, about half a mile from the Crystal Palace. His cab had no sooner pulled up, however, before the gate, than an ominous card in the dining-room window prepared him for a fresh disappointment.

Miss Rivière had left nearly a week ago.

"She went away, sir, the second day after her poor ma's funeral," explained the good woman of the house, a cheery, kindly, good-humoured-looking body, with floury hands and a white apron. "She couldn't abide the place, pretty dear, after what had happened."

"If you will be so kind as to oblige me with Miss Rivière's present address"

"Well, sir, I'm sorry to say that is just what I can *not* do," interrupted the landlady. "Miss Rivière didn't know it herself—not to be certain about it."

"But surely something must have been said—something by which one could form some idea," said Saxon. "Do you think she was going abroad?"

"Oh dear no, sir. She was going to the sea-side."

"You are sure of that?"

"Yes, sir—positive."

"And yet is it possible that no one place was mentioned as being more likely than another?"

"Two or three places were mentioned, sir, but I took no account of the names of 'em."

"You can at least remember one?"

"No, sir—I can't, indeed."

"Try—pray try. Do you think you could remember them if I were to repeat the names of several sea-side places to you?"

His intense earnestness seemed to strike the woman.

"I am very sorry, sir," she said, "but I have no more idea of them than the babe unborn. I don't believe I should know them if I was to hear them—I don't, indeed."

"Did Miss Rivière leave your house—alone?"

"No, sir. Mr. Forsyth went with her."

Saxon almost ground his teeth at that name.

"Mr. Forsyth was very often here, I suppose?" he said.

"Very often, sir."

"Almost every day?"

The woman looked at him with a mixture of curiosity and compassion that showed plainly what she thought of this cross-examination.

"Why, yes, sir," she replied, reluctantly. "I suppose it was about every day, lately."

The young man thanked her, and turned sadly away. At the bottom of the steps he paused.

"You do not even know to which railway terminus they went?" he asked, as a last chance.

She shook her head.

"Indeed, sir, I do not," she answered. "I wish I did."

"If one could even find the cabman who drove them"

The landlady clapped her hands together.

"There, now!" she exclaimed. "Why, to be sure, they went in one of Davis's flys!"

Saxon bounded up the steps again.

"You dear, good soul!" he said. "Where shall I find this Davis? Where are his stables? Where does he live? Tell me quickly."

She told him quickly and clearly—the second turning to the left, and then up a lane. He could not miss it. Every one knew Davis's stables.

He scarcely waited to hear the last words. Full of hope and excitement, he dashed into his cab again, and was gone in a moment.

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AT THE BAR.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "A CRUISE UPON WHEELS," &c. &c.

CHAPTER XXVIII. ON THE SCENT.

WE have lately been so much occupied with the main important incidents of our story, that we have rather lost sight of one individual who sustains a minor part in the drama which is being enacted before us. The affairs of Julius Lethwaite have recently received but little attention from us, but as the moment is at hand when he will take the part in this story which makes him necessary to its complete development, it is time that we looked him up a little.

As far as business matters go then, our cynical friend has not been prospering any better than when we last saw him. The reductions which it was necessary for him to make in his expenditure, have continued to be necessary still, and those means of replenishing his exchequer which he had talked of at first, almost in joke, have been resorted to in all seriousness. Aided and abetted by his musical friends, our harmless cynic has actually obtained admission into the orchestra of one of our leading theatres, a post which provides him with what we figuratively call "bread." For him, who has never done anything except for pleasure, this is really hard work. Night after night he is there at his post, behind the two drums, attentive and watchful as every true drummer should be. The morning rehearsals, too, find him at his place, he is among the most punctual of performers, and has never once been fined for non-attendance.

But Julius Lethwaite is just now under a cloud, with whose overshadowing gloom his own affairs have nothing to do. His friends—for in spite of his losses he still retains a large number of such—are all struck by the change that they detect in him. There is no getting hold of him now, they say, and no getting anything out of him, even when he is got hold of. Of course this is attributed by his circle of acquaintances to his recent misfortunes.

Lethwaite was, however, at this time little inclined for society. This trouble of his friends had come upon him as a blow of the most unexpected sort. His own misfortunes he had borne, as we have seen, with infinite philosophy, almost with indifference, but this which had descended upon his friends had really shaken him. It was *such* a sorrow. Life, character, reputation, were at stake. It was not a mere question of money; the difference between a rosewood wardrobe and a deal cupboard; between a luxurious dinner at the club, and a chop at the Rainbow. And then Julius really believed in his friends. He thought Mrs. Penmore the most perfect of ladies, and this horrible accusation hurt him as if it had been brought against his own sister. Would that there were more such friends as Julius Lethwaite in the world, men to whom it is real pain to hear a friend disparaged, and who do not find in the phrase that takes away the character of a chosen companion something remotely gratifying to themselves. Never—never for one moment—had the strange combination of circumstances which seemed to tell so terribly against this unhappy lady, shaken Lethwaite's belief in her entire innocence. This man, with all his cynicism—with all his doubts of the existence of good in human nature—with all his readiness to impute bad motives where a good one appeared on the surface—was as unsuspicious in this case as a child. It was impossible—simply impossible—that there could be even the very faintest ground for this base suspicion, which had arisen out of a series of mistakes, which he firmly believed would one day be cleared up. Meanwhile he believed, and even should his reason remain unconvinced, he would hold on to his belief with his will.

He would sit by the hour together pondering over the subject, trying to find out the solution of the difficult riddle, or talking it over with his old friend Jonathan Goodrich, who was as great a believer in the Penmores, and in Gabrielle especially, as Lethwaite himself.

"If I could only help them," said Lethwaite, on one of these occasions—"if I could only find out some circumstance that would clear the mystery up. That there is some such thing to be got at, I have no more doubt, Goodrich, than that we are sitting here on each side of the fire. There is something, some little thing, that we have none of us thought of, and which would explain it all, and clear that poor lady from this horrible imputation in a moment."

"The lady's as innocent of the deed as you or I, sir, that we know," said the old clerk. "But how to prove her so, that's the question."

Then they relapsed into silence again, each sitting, staring at the fire, and torturing the subject again and again in his mind.

"I can't rest to-night," said Lethwaite, suddenly rising, and putting on his great-coat and hat. "It is the night before the trial, and I must hear the last tidings, and whether any new discovery may have been made at the eleventh hour. You shall come with me, Goodrich. Even you and I may be of some use or other—who knows?"

"Ah, sir, who knows, indeed?" replied the old fellow, highly gratified.

They were soon on their way to the house in Beaumont-street.

They found poor Gilbert on that night still engaged with his preparations for the morrow. He was looking sadly ill and worn. Recent events, and the state of horrible anxiety in which he was now continually kept, had told upon him to a terrible extent, and he had got very pale and thin within the last few days, so that any one would have noticed it.

"Well, how do you get on?" asked Lethwaite, with an attempt at cheerfulness.

"Hardly as I could wish," replied the poor fellow. "I am obliged to keep *her* spirits up as well as I can; but I am miserably uneasy. The case against us is so strong, and ours wanting in so much."

"Goodrich and I were sitting talking about it all," said his friend, "and I could not resist the desire to see you and inquire if there was any fresh news. So we just came along."

"I am very glad you did. I was driving myself half mad, and unfitting myself for to-morrow's duties altogether." Gilbert paused a little, and then went on: "Do you know what I was thinking of doing, Julius; I was thinking of getting some one to come here and engage in a final search in her room—Miss Carrington's room up-stairs—in the bare hope that something may have been overlooked in previous examinations. My reason for wanting some one besides myself to engage in this search is, that I am incompetent to appear as a witness——"

"Why, we are the very people," said Lethwaite, interrupting him. "Come, let us begin at once. Jonathan here has a great mechanical turn, you know, and nothing will escape him, depend upon it."

"I was just going to say," continued Penmore, "that, if you didn't mind, I would so much rather have you two than any strangers coming about the place. It is the last chance of strengthening the view which I have taken of the case. But I warn you that it is no sinecure I have proposed; the search I ask for is to be a thorough one.

Lethwaite and the old clerk hastened to reassure him on this point, and the three, Gilbert, Julius Lethwaite, and Jonathan Goodrich, went up together to the room occupied by the late Miss Carrington, and proceeded to engage in a strict and final search for some indication which might favour the decision which Penmore had come to, that it was knowingly, and of her own free will, that the deceased had partaken of the drug by which she died; that it had not been given to her, but that she had taken it. It was a connecting link of the last importance—if he hoped to prove that this theory was correct—that he should be able to produce the bottle in which the poison had been kept, and from which she had poured it out and drunk it.

The search now to be engaged in by these three—all deeply interested in its result—was to be complete and exhaustive. The room was to be subdivided into separate portions, to every inch of which (literally) the fullest and most elaborate examination was to be given. Of the subdivisions each one of the persons engaged in the search was to have one allotted to him, and all the objects of furniture, or whatever else such allotment contained, he was to scrutinise, with senses sharpened to the very utmost. The bed, the chimney, and fireplace, the wardrobe, the bureau, or escritoire, the chest of drawers, nay, the very chairs and tables, the floor and walls of the room, were now, it was resolved, to be subjected to the minutest and most microscopic scrutiny. A pair of steps was provided, that even the cornice from which the curtains hung might be examined; there were screw-drivers and hammers at hand, and the carpet was taken up, in order that any hidden receptacle in the boards of the flooring—should any such exist—might be brought to light. In one word, the apartment was to be searched inch by inch, from end to end, and from side to side, no cranny to be left unexplored.

Methodically and systematically each man took his appointed section, and bit by bit, beginning with the portion of the floor and wall of the room which came into his division, and going on from thence to each article of furniture or loose object which came within it, proceeded with this last and most exhaustive search, on which so much depended.

Exhaustive, indeed, that search was. Every drawer in any chest of drawers or cabinet was taken out, and besides that, its contents were examined, the drawer itself was tested, lest it might have any false bottom or false back used as a place of concealment. The covering of a chair, which showed signs of having been ripped open and nailed down again, was once again torn off and the stuffing ransacked throughout. No pains were spared, no *possible* place, where anything as large as an ounce phial could be hidden, was left untested, however hopeless it might seem. If there was the shadow of a doubt about anything, each man was ready to give his advice to the other, or help him if physical force was needed. A board in the flooring which shook, though but very little, when trodden upon, was forced up, and the wood-work beneath rigidly examined. Julius Lethwaite, into whose section the fire-grate came, got his arm through the register, and felt and groped about in the chimney in spite of soot and dirt, thinking that a place of concealment where what they sought for might haply lie hidden. And indeed, for a brief season, those who were engaged in this search did think that this gentleman's courageous exploration was to be rewarded with success. In that dark space above the register his hand

encountered some object which he quickly brought out from its place of concealment, and which actually proved to be a bottle or phial. The other two hastened forward to look at it. Alas! it was not the phial which they were in search of. It had no label, no hint of laudanum inscribed on it, and, to crown all, there was at the bottom of it a small quantity of a dark liquid which, on examination, proved to be a remnant of black draught. It had been stuck there, no doubt, by some sufferer who had just swallowed the dose, in days long gone by, to be out of the way, and, above all things, out of sight.

This was indeed a bitter disappointment. Julius Lethwaite, down upon his knees in front of the fireplace, his hands and face covered with soot, presented a picture of discomfiture infinitely pitiable as he held up that small bottle and smelt it, and turned it about and about. "No," he said, "that phial is not the one we are in search of; there is no hint even of laudanum in it." And he put it down on one of the hobs with a sigh. The others could hardly persuade themselves to give it up. A bottle—a chemist's bottle even—and thrust away in what seemed like a place of concealment—it *must* be what they were in search of. Was Lethwaite sure? Was that liquid really the remains of a black draught? The discoverer handed them the bottle. They smelt, and were convinced, with loathing. Lethwaite continued his search behind the register, nay, he even groped among the cinders in the grate, for there had been nothing disturbed since *that night*, and he thought it possible that even some fragments of broken glass might be found there which would still be better than nothing. But nothing came of his labours, except an increase of sootiness.

All were now beginning to lose hope, and a great sadness had descended upon each one of those present. The search was very nearly over, and had been attended with no sort of success. There was a pause in the work, only one of the seekers—Jonathan Goodrich—going on with it just then. This good man was doing what he had to do with the greatest completeness. He had an especial mechanical turn, it seemed, and was thus particularly well fitted to the undertaking. He was now engaged with that bureau or escritoire, of which mention has been made, and was subjecting it to every test which his ingenuity could suggest. He had a rule in his hand, and was making some measurements which seemed to puzzle him a little for the moment.

"There is something here," he said, presently, "which I do not altogether understand."

Julius Lethwaite got up from his position before the grate, and Gilbert from another part of the room came forward, and both stood together in silence behind the old clerk, who was evidently fairly puzzled.

He had got the lid of the escritoire open. It was a slanting lid that was made for writing upon, and when lifted it disclosed, in the ample space within it, a great variety of small drawers, and a row of little recesses, or, as some call them, pigeon-holes, into which papers may be thrust at pleasure. It was evidently a somewhat old-fashioned piece of furniture, but was—having been at the beginning a handsome and expensive article—solid enough, and in thoroughly good condition.

"That piece of furniture," said Gilbert, looking on with his friend by his side, "was the property of Miss Carrington herself. She bought it at a second-hand shop, as I think, one day soon after she came here, and had it sent home."

"Her own, was it?" said Julius. "That makes it the more important to examine it very carefully." He considered a little while, and then added: "Her own. If we are to find what we are looking for anywhere, it will be here."

Jonathan Goodrich had his rule in his hand, and proceeded to make some measurements in the inside of the piece of furniture. The interior of the desk, which occupied the whole upper part of the bureau, was of considerable size. The back of it was, as has been said, divided into drawers and pigeon-holes. There was a row of these last, ten in number, then a row of three long flat drawers under the ten pigeon-holes, and again under the drawers three very low arches; a sort of oubliettes where objects not likely to be wanted might be stowed away and forgotten. It was with these last that Jonathan appeared to be just now occupied.

"What I cannot make out," he said, "is this. These ten pigeon-holes in a row are all of them of the same depth, nine inches; the three drawers beneath them are also nine inches deep; but the arches under the drawers have, as you see by measurement of this rule, a depth of only five inches."

Neither of the two lookers-on spoke, but each of them looked hastily down the outside walls, so to speak, of the escritoire to see if there was anything in its external structure to account for this. There was nothing. The back and sides of this piece of furniture were perfectly smooth and uniform. Next they proceeded to test Goodrich's measurements. They agreed entirely with his statement. There was a space of the same height and width as each of these arches, and four inches in depth, unaccounted for. Was that space solid, or was it hollow? The old clerk struck the wood at the back of the arches with the handle of a screw-driver, and the sound produced certainly appeared to be of a hollow kind.

"It seems to me," he said, "that these arches have a false back."

Those present looked one another in the face for a moment, as if uncertain how to act. Then a candle was introduced into the desk, and being lowered, regardless of the dripping of grease, almost into a horizontal position, those low arches were lighted up, and Jonathan Goodrich looking in was able to see what was inside.

"There are hinges," he cried, much excited, "and keyholes. The backs *are* false, and would let down, if we had the keys to unlock them."

But here there was a difficulty. The key or keys by which these doors were to be opened were not forthcoming, nor had Gilbert any idea where they could be found. He knew that a great many of the keys belonging to the late Miss Carrington had been taken away by the deceased lady's legal adviser, and these might be—probably were—among them. All the keys in the possession of each person present, all that could be collected in the house, were tried, but in vain. It was too late to send for a locksmith, and at last, after sundry ineffectual attempts had been made with pieces of wire and bent nails to pick the locks, it was decided that the only thing to be done was to force them.

The excitement of those who looked on was now very great. Each felt, and Gilbert Penmore especially, as may easily be believed, how much depended upon what might now be disclosed. There was legitimate reason to hope that something of importance might be revealed. A new field for research had certainly been discovered. The difference between the depth of these arches, and that of the drawers and pigeonholes above them, had escaped those who had previously examined the apartment, and it was only to the minute and scrupulous exactness of the old clerk that their present discovery was to be attributed.

To him now in virtue of his mechanical turn, the office of breaking open the doors, as they may be called, was delegated. With the aid of a screw-driver and a hammer, this was soon accomplished, and the contents of the first of these compartments, beginning with that on the extreme left, were speedily disclosed to view.

Disappointment for everybody. Papers—the whole receptacle was quite full of papers. The deceased lady had had a turn for business, and the hasty glance which Gilbert allowed himself, showed him that these papers bore reference to pecuniary matters—shares in the possession of the deceased, and other things of a like nature. They were swiftly thrust back again, to be examined at some more convenient season, and the central compartment was next forced open.

Disappointment again. Papers again. In this case not so many, and chiefly letters. These also on business matters. Nothing in the shape of a bottle was there, or it would have been detected at once.

There remained now but one more compartment to search, but one more door to break open. On the contents of this receptacle all their hopes depended for fulfilment. Every other place had been searched, and that ineffectually. Men cling to hope so, and dread so much to risk losing the grounds upon which it is based, that the old man discontinued his work for a moment, and paused before examining that last hiding-place, the contents of which were to realise or frustrate all their hopes.

The pause was but a short one, however, and Jonathan Goodrich soon had his tools in hand again, and the door of the last compartment was quickly opened.

For one moment it seemed as if disappointment was again in store for the seekers. At first more papers only were disclosed to view, and the heart of poor Gilbert had already sunk at the sight, when suddenly, as the old clerk drew them forth from their place of concealment, something rolled out after them into the desk—something which at one glance all present perceived to be a bottle.

Gilbert seized it mechanically, and hardly knowing what he did. But it was no time for ceremony, and Julius Lethwaite, who had caught sight of one word upon the label, had it out of his hand in one moment, and was holding it up to the light.

"Cornelius Vampi, herbalist and seedsman," he cried, in violent excitement. "Good Heaven, we are on the eve of some great discovery."

"Why—what do you mean?" asked Gilbert, almost breathless.

"I know him; have known him for some time," cried Lethwaite. "This bottle has come from his shop. He will know all about it."

Meanwhile, Gilbert in turn had got possession of the bottle, and was examining it with eager scrutiny. It was inscribed "Laudanum," and "Poison," in large characters; then came the name of the vendor as Lethwaite had read it. A small—very small quantity—of dark liquid remained at the bottom of the bottle, only a few drops, such as would be left behind after it had been virtually emptied.

Penmore smelt at these, and handed the bottle to his friend.

"It is what we were in search of," he said. He spoke inquiringly, as if afraid as yet to trust the evidence of his senses.

Lethwaite and Goodrich, in turn, smelt the mouth of the bottle. There was no doubt. The faint peculiar smell of opium was there; that smell which seems to warn the very instinct of a man, and to suggest danger to him, even if he is ignorant of the quality of the drug which emits it. Both Lethwaite and the old clerk gave their opinion without hesitation that the bottle had contained laudanum.

Such a flood of hope and joy came pouring into Gilbert's heart as he heard these words, that he remained for a time absolutely speechless. At last he spoke:

"This Vampi, can he be communicated with at once?"

"He *shall* be communicated with at once," replied Lethwaite. "I will go to him without a moment's delay."

"Shall I go with you?"

This question, after being discussed a little, was decided in the negative. It was thought better that Lethwaite should see the philosopher alone, or accompanied only by Jonathan Goodrich, with whom Vampi was already acquainted. He would talk more readily under such circumstances than in the presence of a stranger. Lethwaite promised, however, to bring the man back with him to Beaumont-street in the course of that same long and eventful night. With that he and his old friend and follower took their immediate departure. The crisis was too

important and exciting an one to admit of a moment's unnecessary delay.

For Gilbert, he was not sorry to be for a time alone. The revulsion of feeling, from the despondency which he had felt but a short time since, to the wild, almost confident hope which he believed he might now venture to entertain, was so violent that it deprived him for a time of all power of self-control, and he felt that it was better just now that he should be alone.

His heart, too, was full of gratitude, and it was good to be alone that he might express it, if only in a few rough words that were almost inarticulate. Ah, was it possible that there was hope? Were the days at hand when his Gabrielle would be restored to him, to be his help-meet and his dear companion?

In the lonely house, and at that lonely hour when all was still, Gilbert Penmore sank down upon his knees, and buried his face in his hands.

CHAPTER XXIX. AT THE ELEVENTH HOUR.

She, whose deliverance out of a great danger has been the object of all this anxious and persevering labour, remains meanwhile a close prisoner within the walls of Newgate, leading a life of great monotony outwardly, but of many inward changes of mind as the tide of feeling ebbs or flows, or hope or fear for the time predominates in her heart.

Her outward life, it has been said, is monotonous in the extreme. The hours set apart for the taking of exercise, for meat and drink, for seeing those who come to visit her, are all unvarying day by day. In all these things a wonderful punctuality and regularity are observed. Then she receives visits from the prison matron, the chaplain, from benevolent ladies, and certain well-meaning but often injudicious enthusiasts, who all take it for granted, charitably enough, that she is a guilty woman, and come to urge her to repent of her crime.

There is one missionary gentleman who is especially urgent in this matter. He has been himself a sinner formerly. He has not got a good face, nor a well-shaped head, nor does he impress you agreeably. His features speak of violent passions, and violent struggles, and violent repentance; for the man is no hypocrite. He sees nothing but sin and danger in all directions, and there is little of cheerfulness or comfort in his tenets. He seems actually to gloat over the terrors of religion, and to have little sympathy with its gentler aspects, and even to take but little pleasure in them. This gentleman frightens our poor Gabrielle not a little. He comes to her—naturally timid and self-mistrustful—with threats and promises of vengeance. He has a doctrine of assurance, too, which is terrible; if she does not *feel* that she is saved, if she does not feel assured of the fact, she is lost. Is she converted? Can she lay her finger on the day and hour of her actual conversion? If she is not able to do this, she ought to be. She is not able, and the missionary gentleman almost chuckles to see how his theory is borne out. Evidently all her life has been the life of an unconverted person. This crime which she has committed—for, of course, in his estimation, she has committed it—is only part of such a life as hers has been. He does not regard the act with any special horror, or look upon it as worse than all the other things she has done throughout her wretched, heathen, unconverted life. All of a piece.

This passionate gentleman prays with her and for her; entreats her to watch for any feelings of conversion and assurance which may come into her heart, and altogether frightens and disturbs her so much that her husband seeks an interview with the chaplain of the prison and begs that his (the chaplain's) may be the only religious ministrations which his wife receives, and that on no account she shall be considered guilty, and looked upon as a murderess, till she has been proved to be so before the jury who are to try her. So the passionate gentleman's visits are brought to an end, and he carries his violent countenance and violent doctrines elsewhere, and harasses the poor prisoner no more.

From some of those ladies who visit her Gabrielle would have got more comfort had it not been for that conviction of her guilt with which they approached her, and which has been before spoken of. Every word they said was qualified with this feeling. There was a little chill over these sinless ladies that could not be got rid of. There was a mighty gulf between her and them; a barrier across which they looked and talked, but which might never be, by any means, broken down—the barrier of her guilt.

There was one person certainly whose visits did bring some consolation to this poor suspected creature, and was ever looked forward to eagerly. This was the lady of whom there has been mention made already, though very little has been said of her, except that she had been for many years Gabrielle's governess in the West Indies, and was almost the only friend she had in London. The tidings of her pupil's present misfortune had reached Miss Curtis—which was the lady's name—and she had lost no time in hurrying off to see her. Ah, there was real comfort in having such a friend near her, one who had known her from a child, who had known her too long and too well to doubt her for one single moment. The consternation of this good lady at finding in what a situation her dear pupil had, owing to the strangest combination of circumstances, come to be placed, knew no bounds. The tears of these two were mingled together, unregardful of lookers-on, and many were the long conversations held by them on this terrible subject, while their ingenuity was taxed to the very utmost, but taxed in vain, to try after some reasonable solution of the doubt which hung over the dead lady's fate, and how that poison—since it really was by poison that she died—had come to be administered to her.

Ah, how Gabrielle longed for some clue to that dark mystery, some proof to show to those who trusted her that their faith might be put to the test no longer.

With this lady Gabrielle could talk of the old times, talk of her father, with whom she had always been so great a favourite, and—more painful subject—of her mother, who had not forgiven her for marrying contrary to her will. There appeared reason to believe that this last estrangement was, however, at an end. The news of the awful situation in which her daughter was placed had, it seemed, reached her mother's heart, for the telegraphic despatch which Gilbert had sent off, acquainting Gabrielle's parents with her present danger, had been just answered by another, in which it was stated that both her father *and mother* were coming over to England as fast as steam could bring them.

And with this old friend the imprisoned girl—for she was nothing more—could talk, at length, of the scenes among which she had lived her earliest life. They talked of the house where her childhood had been passed, they went in imagination from room to room, and sat again over their books in the verandah shade. The garden, with its foliage and flowers, so rich and luxuriant, so different from a garden in Europe, rose up before them, and the shady nook which had been Gabrielle's especially, where she had planted what she chose and watched the growth of her favourite flowers. And then they would stretch forth beyond the house limits, and in the cool of the evening, or perhaps in the early morning, before the sun was dangerous, would wander along by the sea-shore, or through the woods, where the verdure was on so wonderful a scale, and where the strange birds, that are caged as curiosities here, and made much of, sung almost unheeded.

And they would talk of Gilbert too. As a little boy he had learnt his first lessons of this worthy lady, before the tutor came to teach the boys. They talked of his quickness and cleverness, and how he and Gabrielle had always been such friends and comrades, and how they had seemed to be intended for each other from the very first. And then, oh, then, some cruel reality would dissipate in a moment these visions of the past, in which they had been so absorbed, that the present was forgotten. Some incident of jail-life would recal them in a moment to a consciousness of the real state of things—thrust it before them in all its horror, and the old lady would remember that this, her dear little pupil, was shut up in the prison of Newgate, accused of a capital offence, and awaiting her trial, and the pupil herself would think of this too at the same moment, and bitter tears would fill the eyes of both.

But there were times when no visitors were admitted. Long seasons of utter inaction, when weary thoughts, and thoughts that were even terrible, were by no means to be evaded. The days were short at this time, and the period of time during which darkness covered the earth was terribly, and, as it seemed, disproportionately long. The evenings, too, were endless, and though Gabrielle was allowed to have a light, and to read, it yet appeared as if the time would never pass. There is something depressing to the animal spirits in reading over-long; and besides, our unhappy prisoner could not always fix her attention upon what she read. The awful life of suspense which she was leading made her at times restless and incapable of fixing herself to any occupation.

And then the nights. Was there any end to these? To Gabrielle they appeared to be interminable. Her sleep was fitful, a sort of wretched unrefreshing doze, and even this continually interrupted, and every such snatch of repose followed by a long period of wakefulness. Her cell was dimly lighted, and many were the dreary hours which she passed gazing at the uninteresting objects and forms which the obscure light revealed, and with which she was already familiar even to disgust. She formed the shadows on the wall into spectres. The active imagination turned all sorts of well-known objects into shapes which frightened her, and yet she must needs look on. The quietness appalled her. The interior of the jail was as still at night as the very grave itself, and she longed with a longing that cannot be told for the morning noises and the morning light. It was a weary time.

And what sleep she got was it not troubled with terrible and unhallowed dreams? Dreams more or less tinctured with the disquietude of her waking thoughts. Sometimes she dreamed of days not long gone by. Happy days they were, though they had hardly appeared so at the time. They had been—she and her husband—so straitened lately as to means, that they had got to dwell on the subject of poverty too exclusively, and to think it almost the only evil that existed. The poverty never reappeared in her dreams, but only the happiness of those days, when she and Gilbert were, at least, together. Poverty! What was a poverty, that they both shared, to this?

One night her dreams, abandoning the past, stretched on to what was to come. It was at a time the most critical that could well be conceived that she thus dreamed, for on the very next day her trial was to begin. All day long that one thought had been before her. She had had only a short interview with Gilbert, but every moment of it had been occupied with talk about the trial, and what he intended to do with the defence. He had appeared very sanguine to her, though secretly, in his inmost heart, he was at that time but ill at ease. Again, she had been visited by her old governess, and then the talk had still been about the coming trial. Gabrielle had thought of it incessantly as she lay wakeful in her bed, and when at last she fell into a sort of uneasy slumber, it influenced even her sleeping thoughts. It was the trial, which lay before her, and which occupied her mind so continually during her waking hours, that came to trouble her now.

It was a very different thing, though, to any-

thing she had ever pictured to herself at other times, for the vast hall in which it took place was almost empty and very dark. Only light enough to see that the judge by whom she was to be tried was—horror of horrors—Jane Cantanker! Jane Cantanker turned into an old man; there was a ghastly thing, too, yet Jane Cantanker herself. There was no other judge, no jury, no spectators, except one who sat at the furthest end of the hall, eating at a table covered with a white cloth. He was a perplexing person this, and had no settled identity, but kept on changing. Now he was the chaplain of the jail, and now again he was Julius Lethwaite. At one time he would be that Dr. Giles, surgeon to the police, who was called in when Miss Carrington died, and at another he would wear the appearance of a clown—a stage clown, painted white and red, and very terrible to behold. Even in a dream it seemed something inconsistent that he should go on eating, too, in a court of justice, and it seemed odd, also, that the table at which he ate, and over which the white cloth was spread, should be in shape like a coffin.

Gilbert was there, and she knew that he was to plead for her defence. Oh, she was sensible enough about that. There were no other barristers present, though, and no court officials. The whole trial was in the hands of Gilbert and the judge, for the man who sat in the corner eating took no part in it at all. He never left off eating except to stare with wan eyes at her, and slowly to draw his knife across his throat in dumb show, intimating to her that she need not hope for mercy. Horrible action, taking into consideration the look of the man and his surroundings, and the fact of his being the only person present. But it was all horrible, and most horrible of all was the silence in which the whole trial was conducted. The judge did not speak, and, as for Gilbert, he made no attempt to defend her. He sat with his arms folded, leaning back in his seat, with a sort of sarcastic smile upon his face. Even when the witnesses began to appear they never spoke. They came up one by one and denounced her in dumb show. They pointed at her. They made horrible grimaces, and shook their heads at her, but they did not speak. Nor did any one of them ever retire. They came up one by one, till at last they were all assembled in array against her. There they stood grinning and mouthing and pointing at her. In the place into which they were penned, there was not room for them all to stand abreast, and so those behind were fain to leap up and down in a sort of monotonous dance, in order that they might show themselves above the heads of those in the front rank, and might, like them, denounce her by their gestures. Among them all—those that stood pointing silently in front, and those who leaped and danced behind—there was not a single face that she knew, except one. There was one of those witnesses who remained quite quiet in a shadowy corner, and never moved or ceased to gaze upon her. Why, it was Jane Cantanker again! The judge was gone, and there was she who had been the judge, penned in among the witnesses—the silent witnesses against her. And still her husband did nothing to help her, only sat by and smiled.

And she herself, she who was undergoing this horrible ordeal, what could she do? Nothing, absolutely nothing. Totally tongue-tied and paralysed. Terror, the terror that we know in dreams, was upon her, but she could not cry out for help, nor even appeal to Gilbert, to entreat him not to sit there and smile, but to come and help her—help her, above all things, against those dreadful witnesses who mouthed and pointed at her.

But she was convicted. In a moment, she knew not how or by whom, but she knew it. She was doomed, and they were all against her, and there sat her husband, her own Gilbert, unmoved, with folded arms, and still with that dreadful smile. Will he never stir? He does not even look at her. He sits and smiles, even now, when she has been convicted—now, when she is to die, when all the witnesses in two rows, one above the other, are pointing at her—not now, when the man who was eating—what is he doing? He is kneeling on one knee, surely, on the coffin-table, and he has got a gun, and is taking aim at her. There is no escape, the gun follows her, the muzzle is pointed at her. If she throws herself down, the gun is lowered. If she springs up, it is raised. It is always pointed at her. And now she is still, she cannot move for fear. She cannot move nor scream for help. His aim is steady now—and now—he fires.

Gabrielle started up with a scream, awakened in a moment by the crash. The noise was a real noise. It was caused by the sudden drawing back of the bolt outside her door, but the poor dreamer could at first neither understand this nor anything else. She was all in her dream. It had been so true, so terrible, that for the time it was actually stronger than fact. The dream was the real thing, and what was now going on around her was the vision.

By degrees realities began to assert themselves once more, and she knew that she had dreamed. That was the first symptom of returning consciousness. Then came a dreadful thought; this was the day of her trial. She did not wake, as the reader does from a fearful dream, finding that he is in his own home, and that it was all fancy. She did not wake thus. It was not all fancy, for this was the day of her trial, and oh, if that dream should be ominous.

Still half bewildered, Gabrielle becomes conscious that there is some one speaking to her. It is a female turnkey, who entered when that bolt, whose loud report came so aptly into Gabrielle's dream, was withdrawn. The woman holds a note in her hand, and solicits Gabrielle's attention to it. She sees her husband's handwriting, and is broad awake in a moment. The note runs thus:

"A new witness has turned up at the last moment. He has been in the habit of selling

laudanum to the late Miss Carrington. His evidence changes all. Hope, dearest, hope for everything good, as I firmly believe you may.

"Your GILBERT."

WHY WE CAN'T GET RECRUITS.

IN a former number of this journal I published my experiences as an old non-commissioned officer, respecting military punishments.* The paper I wrote has been much talked of in barrack-room, officers' quarters, and sergeants' mess, throughout the service. I am, therefore, tempted to take up my pen again, and attempt to explain why it is that so few men will now enlist into the army, and why such a small proportion will renew their engagements after their first ten years of soldiering are over.

A non-commissioned officer knows, as I observed in my first paper, a great many opinions of the barrack-room, respecting which the officers are utterly ignorant. Moreover, commissioned officers are, if young men, careless, as a general rule, of what either the men or the public think of the service. If, on the other hand, they are of some standing in their corps, they believe and say that the army will last *their* time, and so they let things take their course. Not only is anything like an opposition to the status quo of the service very much disliked among officers of all ranks, but those who, by their standing, are entitled to give an opinion on military matters, may be divided into the fortunate and the unfortunate. The former are almost invariably men of wealth, and, as the world has gone well with them, they believe that no one has a right to grumble at the existing rules of our military system. The unfortunates are nearly always poor, officers who have been by their poverty kept from rising, and who have a sort of pride in not acknowledging what, amongst their wealthier companions, is looked upon almost as their shame. As regards the reasons why more men do not enlist or re-enlist in the service, who will say that the question is of no importance? In the year 1867 many thousands of men will have completed their ten years' service, and, unless something be done to change or alter the system, we shall then see many of our best regiments—nearly all those serving in India—left as the old Spanish army was said to be, with plenty of officers, but no soldiers. Did I not read the other day, in one of the Indian papers, that there is a battalion of the rifle brigade, stationed somewhere on the extreme north-west frontier of India, of which one-third of the men are about to take their discharge this year, while of the two-thirds left with the regiment, more than one-half are raw recruits? The men who go home must have their passage paid. They will take their fling in England, and most of them will re-enlist—the greater number of them going back to India, and thus having their passage paid twice over, on a holiday trip. Is such a state of things right? Would not the thousands of pounds thus expended do a great deal towards making the soldier more comfortable, and increasing his chances of promotion? Doubtless.

Let us take any educated man of the English working classes—say the compositor who has "set up" these lines — does any one suppose that he would work at his present calling if he did not hope to better himself? It is the same with soldiers. There are many who might have, and who ought to have, commissions, were it only as an example and encouragement to others. And of those that might be promoted, there are not a few who would rather not accept the boon. Military members of parliament are fond of quoting this as a proof that soldiers are quite happy in the non-commissioned ranks, and that they don't wish to rise higher. But the exact contrary is the fact. Many of us decline commissions—or, rather, don't press our claims when we believe that we might get promotion, which amounts to much the same thing—simply because we know that the advancement can lead to nothing further, and that, although pretty comfortable as sergeants or sergeant-majors, we should be little better than paupers if we got commissions. Take my own case. My father was a clergyman of the Irish Established Church. He had some private means besides his living, and gave me a very good education. I was his only son, and he had long promised to purchase a commission for me. But when I was eighteen he got involved by the failure of a country bank, and died of the worry, disgrace, and annoyance, of having his name published in the list of bankrupts. My mother had died years before, when I was very young; and my only sister was married to a chaplain out in India. When my father's affairs were wound up, I had the sum of one hundred and five pounds to begin the world upon. What could I do? I was recommended to go out as a sheep-farmer to Australia; but my love for soldiering was strong upon me—it was a passion. In a neighbouring town there was quartered a squadron of a very smart light dragoon regiment. The major commanding the party had often dined at my father's house. I went to the barracks, and told him that I intended to enlist. He was a kind-hearted man as ever lived, and tried hard to dissuade me, telling me that I should never be happy in a barrack-room. I asked him if he would use his influence to get me a commission? He replied that he would gladly do so; but that, unless I was able to purchase it, it was useless to dream of getting into the service. Moreover, that if I could get my late father's friends to subscribe the money for an ensigncy or a cornetcy, I should need at least two hundred pounds a year to live on in an infantry, and double that to pay my way in a cavalry, regiment; unless I made up my mind to serve in regiments quartered in India, and in no other station—exchanging from the corps I be-

* See page 296 of the present volume.

longed to whenever it was ordered home, into one that was remaining in the country. Of course, then, my obtaining a commission was out of the question. But young men are seldom otherwise than sanguine; so I determined to enlist, and work my way to officers' rank; little thinking that the day would come when I should refuse promotion, even if it were offered to me.

The major of whom I have spoken would not receive me as a recruit; he said that he would not do me any such bad turn. I therefore embarked for England, and, hearing that recruiting sergeants were always to be found in Charles-street, Westminster, I went thither, and was soon beset by half a dozen of the craft, all anxious to secure a likely-looking youngster. In the well-known tavern, called the Hampshire Hog, I enlisted for her Majesty's —th Light Dragoons, then quartered at Jock's Lodge Barracks, near Edinburgh. I was sent down to the regiment, got through my drill and riding-school in a very short time, and in two years from the date of enlistment was promoted to the rank of corporal. Three years later, I was made a sergeant, and was appointed one of the drill instructors of the corps. When the Crimean war had broken out, my regiment was ordered to the East, and I had then been about fifteen years in the service. It was during the fearful winter before Sebastopol, that I was made a troop sergeant-major, and it was then that I met with an old acquaintance. I had been over to Kamiesh to take charge of some stores, and went into one of the French suttlers' huts, or tents, to get a glass of brandy. Several French officers were sitting there, some taking their coffee, others their absinthe. One of them sprang up, called me by my name, and advancing towards me, shook me warmly by the hand, asking me in English—or rather in Irish —how I was. To make a long story short, this was an old playfellow of mine, in my native village. He was a Catholic, and nephew of the Catholic parish priest. His uncle had sent him abroad to be educated for their Church, but the young fellow soon discovered that he had no vocation for the priesthood, and took service as a private soldier in a French regiment formed of adventurers from all parts of Europe, and which always serves in Algeria. He had got himself naturalised a Frenchman, had been transferred to the Chasseurs d'Afrique, and, when I saw him, was a first captain of some three years' standing, expecting daily his promotion to the rank of "chef d'escadrons"—what we should call major. He had enlisted in the French army about the same time that I had taken service in the English. He was close upon being a field-officer, while I had only just been made a troop sergeant-major. My friend told me that he had never had the slightest interest, except what he had made for himself. He wore the legion of honour, which he had won after some hard-fought skirmish in Africa, when he was yet a non-commissioned officer. With a very little care, he said, his pay sufficed for all his wants. The only help he ever had, was forty pounds from his uncle the parish priest when he became an officer, to enable him to buy his uniforms; and a subsequent ten-pound note when he was promoted from sub-lieutenant of the Chasseurs d'Afrique, to be lieutenant in a lancer regiment. I thought at the time, what innumerable advantages the French service has over our own, for one who is in earnest.

At the time I speak of, and for several years afterwards, I should have been only too glad to receive a commission. But it would have been then most unfair to give me one, for there were the regimental sergeant-major, and five troop sergeant-majors, senior to me, as good soldiers as I was, and like myself looking out for promotion. At the famous charge at Balaklava, and from the effects of exposure during the winter, we lost twelve officers. Of these vacancies two were filled up from the non-commissioned ranks; that is, the adjutancy was given to the regimental sergeant-major, and the quartermastership to one of the troop sergeant-majors, and thus, at the end of the campaign, I was left with the new regimental and four troop sergeant-majors senior to me in the corps. I may mention that when I met my Irish friend in Constantinople at the end of the war, he had been promoted to be major. And he told me that, in his regiment, every man that had sergeant's rank at the beginning of the campaign, and four or five that had only been corporals, had received commissions—some in their own regiments, some in other regiments—a few who had entered the Crimea with sergeant's chevrons on their arms, had returned to France with captain's epaulettes on their shoulders.

My prospects of a commission being not very encouraging, I volunteered, shortly after my return from the Crimea, for India. A hussar regiment was under orders to proceed there, and volunteers were asked for from all the other regiments in the service. I found I could only go as a sergeant, for the list of troop sergeant-majors was already full. However, as the Sepoy mutiny had just broken out, I thought there would be a chance of obtaining a commission, for hard knocks were sure to be plentiful. Nor was I disappointed, for from the first we were sent wherever there was fighting, and for two years we did nothing but march almost from one end of India to the other. My new colonel behaved very well to me. I came to the regiment with a strong letter of recommendation from my old commanding-officer, and it did me good service. I was promised the first vacancy of troop sergeant-major, and the promise was kept. I was promoted, before the ship on which the head-quarters of the corps embarked, arrived at Bombay. Still my commission seemed as far off as ever. There were plenty of vacancies among our officers, some by deaths in action, others from sickness, but of all these, not more than three were filled up from the sergeant-majors. After three years of campaigning work, and two in cantonments, I was sent home from India with a very bad liver. I had then been about twenty-three or twenty-four years in the

army. When I reached England the medical men said I should never be able to serve again in a hot climate, though I was good for many years' work in England. I was therefore sent to the depôt of my regiment, where I shall serve until entitled to my pension. As I had left the head-quarters of the corps, a sergeant-major had to be appointed to my troop in my place; so when I joined the depôt, I had to revert to the rank of sergeant: thus being further off my commission than I was ten years before.

This is my own case, and yet I am one of the fortunate men of the army. Before I left India, and since I came home, I have been told by two different commanding-officers, that if I can only manage to hold on for a few years longer, I may reckon on being promoted to an adjutancy or quartermastership. But of what good will a commission be to me then? The best years of my life are gone. Even if I had been lucky enough to obtain what I coveted so much long ago, should I now have been any the better for it? The regimental sergeant-major of my first corps was promoted in the Crimea to be cornet and adjutant. He has been eleven years in the same rank—except that he is now lieutenant and adjutant, but still a subaltern—and has seen at least twenty officers pass over his head. They had money; he had none. If he could have purchased, he would now have commanded the regiment; for the present lieutenant-colonel of the corps was junior to him as a cornet, joined the regiment about twenty years later than he did, and will in all probability be a general officer long before his adjutant is a captain.

I have now given one strong reason why very few Englishmen who think they can ever better themselves otherwise in the world, dream of enlisting in the army.

But why do so few of those who have served the ten years for which they enlisted in the army, take service again? For the reason that they take no root in the service. All soldiers cannot expect to be officers, nor even non-commissioned officers. In no army is this the case, and not a whit more among the French than among ourselves. Some men are not smart enough at drills; others (cavalry men) not good enough riders; many are not sufficiently well educated; not a few are too fond of a glass of liquor more than is good for them—or otherwise unmanageable. There are many excellent well-behaved soldiers, who are well up in writing, and what amount of arithmetic is required of them, but who have not enough of the devil in them to make non-commissioned officers. Every soldier will know exactly what I mean. None of these classes of men expect or look forward to becoming even corporals, or, if they get so far up the ladder, they very soon come to grief. The over-quiet soldiers make capital orderly-room clerks, schoolmasters, or quartermasters' assistants, but they are never able to command other men. However, this ought not to hinder them from having something to look forward to—a pension which will at any rate keep them from want. But not only are our pensions very small; they are extremely difficult to gain, and more difficult to retain; insomuch that no soldier begins even to think about them until he has been eighteen or twenty years in the army, and is already counting the days when he will be able to leave the service for good.

I read in the papers that some very well-meaning people are talking of altering the period of enlistment, and of reverting to the old twenty, or twenty-four years of service. They say this will produce a change. So it will, but not in the direction hoped for. Make the term of enlistment twenty years, and you may give all the recruiting staff unlimited leave of absence, for you will not get a dozen men to take the shilling where even now a hundred are procurable. Instead of augmenting, I would diminish the period of service from ten to seven years. For the latter term you will get plenty of men to enlist; but during those seven years you must manage to make the good men like the service, while as for the bad, the sooner you get rid of them the better.

Military members of parliament frequently assert that the most troublesome soldiers are those who have at one period of their lives filled some better situation in life; and that they would rather have the most decided rough, than any broken-down gentleman, or man of what may be called the better classes. This may be true—no doubt in some respects it is. But whose fault is it? Our officers—at least the greater number of them, for there are some of them who take a common-sense view of the subject—have an intense dislike to any scheme which narrows the gulf between the commissioned and non-commissioned ranks. When a recruit joins a regiment, and it comes to the notice of his officers that he is or has been in a better position at one time, the remark generally is, that it is to be hoped "the dashed nonsense will soon be taken out of him." The non-commissioned officers almost invariably take their cue from their superiors, and so the unfortunate "gentleman recruit" has certainly not a good time of it. In addition to every corporal and sergeant in his troop being more or less "down on him," every awkward gesture and every blunder at drill or riding-school is made the subject of public derision in the barrack-room, for the men too often follow the example of the non-commissioned officers. Thus the man who, most likely, entered the army hoping for speedy promotion, and had in him the qualities that would make a good soldier, a capital non-commissioned officer, or an experienced officer—may take to drink to drown care, pass his days in the guard-room or the cells, get flogged, and end his life in hospital from delirium tremens.

I don't state this as being my own experience, nor do I think that gentlemen soldiers are the only good men we can get in the English army. It happened that when I joined as a recruit, the captain of my troop was a very

kind-hearted man, and, pitying what he considered the fallen condition of a young fellow, who, although the son of a clergyman, had enlisted as a private dragoon, he told the troop sergeant-major to see that I was not bullied. The consequence was that I was well treated, and got through my novitiate without being laughed at more than any other recruit. I think not only that a gentleman may be made a very good soldier, but that if any hopes of promotion were held out to him he would become a better man than very many of his comrades.

The question is, How are soldiers to be *made* to take a pleasure in their work? "A little leaven leaveneth the whole mass:" if a small proportion of men in any regiment, squadron, troop, or company, could be made up of men who, by study, and application at the regimental school, were qualifying themselves for commissions, they would become influential for good over all their companions. For these, proper schools should be established, as in France, and a certain number of non-commissioned officers in each regiment should, if they wished, be allowed to go to the Military College, and there prepare themselves for the higher ranks of the service. Those who were wanting either in the primary education or the will to go through this ordeal, should be taught trades and handicrafts which could put money into their pockets while serving, and give them the means of earning their bread honestly when their period of soldiering was at an end, besides making them useful both to themselves and to the army on a campaign. Let a man who was sensible that he had not the qualifications for a non-commissioned officer, feel that he was bettering his condition more and more the longer he remained in the service, and depend upon it there would not be such a list of deserters sent up by every country post to Scotland-yard as there is at the present day.

"Satan finds some mischief still for idle hands to do," is one of the truest proverbs, or sayings, that was ever printed. When not marching, or on days when there has been no parade to cause an extra cleaning of horses, arms, belts, and clothes, no man can find sufficient employment to keep him from idleness in his military duties only. He absolutely requires further occupation; without it, he gets into mischief of some sort. The desideratum is to give him variety of occupation, by teaching him some trade that will be of benefit to himself and to the service. This is the grand secret which the French know well. There, every man knows that if he attains to the rank of corporal, it is the first—only the first, certainly, but none the less sure—step towards a commission. It is not every corporal who can be in time promoted to be an officer, but it is none the less certain that every soldier of that rank looks forward to that advancement. This not only keeps him well behaved, but gives him a positive pride in the humble rank he holds, such as we look for in vain in our own non-commissioned ranks.

It is difficult to conceive any human being in a more false position than an English officer who has risen from the ranks, among his new comrades. If he be a married man, of course he sees but little of them; never, in fact, save at parade, or occasionally when he dines at mess. As a general rule, he has married some person in humble circumstances; for what "respectable" father or mother would allow their daughter to wed a mere sergeant? The wives of the other officers call on Mrs. Blank, when Sergeant Blank is promoted, and there their intercourse ceases. Husband and wife are, as regards society, like Mahomet's coffin, which is neither on earth nor in heaven. They cannot mix with their old friends, and they have nothing in common with their new. If by chance there be some one other married officer in the corps who has also been promoted from the ranks, these form together a little society, and keep among themselves. If, on the other hand, the promoted officer be a bachelor, it is more than probable that he has nothing but his pay to live on: which means that he cannot live in a regiment quartered in England and do as his brother officers do. The commanding officer knows this full well, and invariably gives him leave not to belong to the mess. He therefore lives on good terms with his comrades, but sees nothing of them socially. In the French army, non-commissioned officers are treated by the commissioned ranks, much as midshipmen in our navy are treated by lieutenants. Most French officers have at one time or other served in the ranks; in which men of the best blood in France are to be found. The apologists of our service say that the reason for this, is, that the French army is mainly recruited by conscription, whereas our ranks are filled by voluntary enlistment. But it is well known that almost every man of the better class who is to be found in the ranks of the French service, is a man who has enlisted voluntarily, and not as a conscript. The non-commissioned or commissioned officers are taken abundantly from those who have voluntarily joined the army. When one of these becomes sub-lieutenant, he finds, in his new grade, many old comrades. No matter how poor he may be, he can dine and mix with them. He has his pay, and on that he can live as well as any of his brother-officers. There in nothing so universally frowned upon in the French army as extravagance, and there is no crime which finds less mercy with the French army authorities than debt.

The plain-clothes wearing, horse keeping, mess-plate having, mess-dinners giving, expensive wine drinking, up to London rushing, life, which forms the every-day existence of many of our English officers, has no parallel whatever in the French army. Men enter the profession of arms in that country as they take to the law, to medicine, to the church, or to any avocation; that is to say, to work, and to earn bread and, if possible, distinction for themselves. In England, for the vast majority of those who can afford to live in a regiment at home, military life is made a pleasant

pastime with which to spend the years between twenty and thirty. This is one grand reason why all gentlemen without a certain income of their own—independent of what they require to purchase their first commissions and subsequent promotion—avoid the army, or else make up their minds to soldier in the colonies all their lives. Let any one watch the changes that take place in a regiment ordered home from India, and note what a number of officers exchange into regiments which remain in that country. Is it the love of Indian life that makes them do this? Certainly not; it is their inability to "keep up the pace" in the regiment at home. If any poor man be lucky enough to be promoted to a commission, even while still young and active, he is obliged either to serve all his days in the East, or to live apart from his companions. The English army is at present so constituted that it is a service solely for the rich, and this is one reason why the class we most want in our ranks enlist so rarely, and why those who get over their ten years in the ranks so rarely renew their engagements. It is in quantity as well as quality, too, that our recruiting is falling off. If another such war as that of the Crimea were to break out, or if an emergency like the Indian mutiny of 1857 were to arise, we might have to fill our ranks from amongst the inmates of our jails and the ticket-of-leave men; so unpopular has the service become, not only among artisans, but among agricultural labourers.

There is no doubt that the English army might be made as popular a service in England as that of France is in France. But we have so many "vested interests" to consider, and so many people to conciliate, that we seldom or never do the right thing at the right time. In short, it is "un-English," or un-something else equally intelligible, to change "the system, sir, the system," and so the system lingers on.

IN THE LOWLANDS.

There is something very fascinating in the sport of angling. I don't mean vulgar bottom fishing, where "the fool at one end" merely drops his line, and waits until the bob of the float warns him that a foolish fish has swallowed the "worm at the other." Not that kind of piscatorial art, which any one can compass; but the graceful throwing of the two hair casting line with the three barbed flies floating from it—the art that is all grace and delicate skill, and, as Izaak Walton hath it, gentleness—the art which handles a fish tenderly as if it loved him. I learned to cast a fly when I was very young, and one of my oft-recurring dreams in after-life, when far distant from my native trout streams, was of myself, a boy again, standing on a chair and taking down a black hickory fishing-rod from over the dining-room door at home. In my dream, I took down the rod, put it together, adjusted the line and hooks, and reached the banks of the Islay: but always when I was on the point of casting the line into a well-remembered stream, I awoke. Through many years, I dreamt this dream over and over again, and in my waking hours longed to realise it—to fish in the Islay or the Deveron once again.

At last my longing is about to be gratified. Here flows the Deveron at my feet; and I am going to relate a strange thing that happened to me. I was not provided with a rod, and went forth to buy one. There was not one for sale in all the little town, but I was informed that a turner, in a certain street, would probably lend me one. I proceeded to the turner, and he lent me a rod. I take the pieces out into his yard to put them together, and, as I handle the slips of hickory, a strange feeling steals over me, and I begin to think that it cannot be reality—that I am dreaming that dream again. I have put the whole rod together, and my first vague impression is confirmed past a doubt. It is my own old rod, the one that rested over the dining-room door at home, the one that I had taken down in my dreams! It is more than twenty years since I handled it, yet I know it by my sense of touch, almost before I look at it, and notice my father's initials on the handle. How it ever found its way from the Islay to the Deveron, I did not care to inquire; but here it was, to be my companion once again after a long parting. I felt that it had come on purpose to meet me, like a dear old friend. Another odd circumstance: the first gun I handle, is one I used when at the university in Aberdeen, fifty miles distant from the place where I now find it.

It is not a dream this time. I cast my line, and find that I can cast as skilfully as ever; and I have all the old sportsman's fire in my veins, until suddenly I land a large trout. And now the sight of the poor creature lying gasping on the bank, with a cruel hook through its tongue, reminds me that I have been living in towns. It is not all wickedness, and hard-heartedness, and indifference, that one learns in large cities. I am struck with compunction for the tortures I am inflicting on this innocent fish. It goes to my heart to wrench that piece of barbed steel from its mouth—I have almost a mind to throw it into the water again, and give it its life. Have I grown tender-hearted or effeminate? So, when the bird falls at my feet, and I see its dying eyes looking up at me reproachfully, I feel as though some of the contents of that deadly gun, were in my own breast. But man soon relapses into barbarism. In a day or two I have no feelings for the fish, and can dash their brains out against my iron heel without compunction: can even leave them to gasp out their lives on the bank, doubtless in the agony of what to them is drowning.

From this little town of Banff, which is the basis of my holiday operations, I make excursions into several districts of the Lowlands, and see a good deal of rural as well as town life. I do not see these places for the first time. I passed my boyhood among them, and, visiting them, after many years, with some powers of observation and judgment to aid my early im-

pressions, I shall scarcely fall into those glaring errors which are so often committed by travellers who, visiting strange lands for the first time, see only the surface of things. Standing on the top of a hill, which is rather irreverently said to command a view of "all the kingdoms of the world," I observe that a great advance has been made in the cultivation of the land since I last stood on that hill twenty years ago. On every hand cultivation has crept up the barren hill-sides, and wrested corn and other fruits from tracts of land which were formerly black moss or heath-covered rock. These improvements have been made by the people themselves, without any aid, and sometimes without any encouragement from their landlords; so a trustworthy tenant informs me. And here a word or two on the great Scotch landowners. In many quarters the Scotch have as much reason as the Irish to complain of absenteeism. The lord, who owns the soil, and derives his income from the industry of his tenants, too often passes the greater part of his time in London, leaving his estates to be managed by agents, or, as they are called here, "factors." The people do not complain, but they deeply feel the injustice of such neglect. It means much when some poor little farmer says to a Londoner, "Well, and what does our lord do up in London; do you hear of him much; is he gay?" I heard of a Scotch proprietor, whose rent-roll is nearly a hundred thousand pounds a year, who never visits his estates except to shoot the game. The money which his tenants make for him, struggling with a stubborn soil under a most inclement sky, is nearly all spent in the neighbourhood of Pall-Mall. Very little of it, indeed, goes back into the channel whence it came. In many things some of the Scotch landowners are quite as selfish, quite as exacting, quite as tyrannical, as any privileged serf-owning noble in the empire of the Czar. For example. Here is an honest hard-working man renting a farm which yields him and his family only a bare living; and one of the conditions on which he holds his lease is, that he will not only abstain from killing game himself, but do everything in his power to preserve the game, to afford sport for his lord. I walked over a farm one day, which was overrun with game and ravenous birds of every description. In addition to hares, rabbits, pheasants, and partridges, which feasted at all times upon the corn and the turnips, thousands of rooks (from my lord's rookery) came every morning, and spent the day in the richest field they could find. And it was more than this poor farmer's lease was worth, to shoot even a rabbit. It made my blood boil to think of such selfishness and injustice; but the farmer took it very quietly.

"I knew all this before I took the farm," he said.

It is hard to get a Scotchman to own that he is oppressed in any way. He does not mind owning to a sentimental grievance about the place which his lion holds in the British shield, or the precedence of the Lord Provost of Edinburgh in a state ceremonial; but he will not admit that there is any hardship in the conditions under which he lives in his native land. He is too proud for that. He will not be pitied.

The contrast between the condition, manners, and habits, of the agricultural classes of Scotland, and those of England, is very remarkable. Take, for example, any farm of a hundred acres or so, in the midland counties of England. What sort of person is the farmer? In some cases he is a person who wears a smock-frock and hobnailed boots, who smokes his pipe and drinks his ale at the beer-shop, his convivial "sentiment" being "more pigs and fewer parsons," who "ain't no scollard," who takes his meals in the kitchen with his labourers, and who brings his sons up to be carters and ploughmen, or, at the very highest, veterinary surgeons. In Scotland, a person renting a farm of the same extent is a gentleman. If he have not been to college, he has attended the parochial school and received a good general education. His house, though it may be small, and covered with a thatch roof, is furnished with elegances as well as comforts. He has his silver spoons, and his silver toddy ladles, and is in a position to entertain his aristocratic landlord if he should happen to call. His sons are at college, learning Greek and Latin; his daughters are at boarding-school in the county town, learning French and the piano; his wife can cook, but she can also play and sing; and the domestic life of the family is marked by the graces of refinement and the courtesies of polite society. I need not say what is the condition of English labourers and farm-servants, but I will ask you to step into the kitchen of a Scotch farm-house, and see how the ploughmen and harvest-workers spend the evening after the labours of the day. The supper has just been finished. What does a London cab-driver or dock-labourer say to the bill of fare? A dish of greens, or mashed turnips, or potatoes, oat cakes, and milk. Not a scrap of butcher's meat of any kind. And now, the reapers, the gatherers, the binders, and the rakers, are seated round the fire to enjoy themselves. "Black Janet," as the old-fashioned shell-lamp (which burns with train oil and the pith of a rush) is called, assists the blazing peat fire to shed a light on the scene; the hearth is cleanly swept; the lasses in their trim cotton jackets and wincey petticoats are seated at their spinning-wheels; the herd-boy is in a corner, perhaps learning his multiplication-table; and the grieve or foreman of the labourers is reading aloud the news of the world from the county paper. These people have an interest for topics which possess little attraction for the same classes in England. They know all that is going on in parliament; in the general assemblies of their two kirks; they follow foreign wars, and the events of the world generally; and the names of eminent public men and their characteristics are as well known to them as they are to some people who move in higher circles and call themselves politicians. Hot political and theological debates are carried

on in Scotch farm-house kitchens, and the arguments are sometimes conducted with a knowledge of the bearings of the question at issue which is perfectly surprising. I met a ploughman who knew a good deal—a good deal more than I did—about the chemistry of manures. He said that Liebig was a clever man who had done a great service to agriculturists, but his theory was not always sustained by actual practice. I met a common gardener who carried a microscope in his pocket, and could tell me the botanical name of every flower in the district. He knew also the different kinds of wild birds. Another, a ploughman, had a small library by his bed in the loft over the stable. Among his books I observed an abridgment of Hume and Smollett's History of England, and an expensive edition of Goldsmith's Earth and Animated Nature, which he had taken in in parts. Scott's novels and Burns's poems are to be found in the humblest houses of Scotland, and illustrations from the works of both writers are familiar in every mouth.

The Scotch are said to be much given to whisky; but the rural population have very few opportunities of indulging a taste for strong drink of any kind. I have now in my eye half a dozen Scotch parishes of great extent, which have only one public-house each. In any one of them, these drinking-shops are within easy reach of only two or three farms. The majority of Scotch farm-servants never taste whisky, except at the end of the term (their half year's period of service); when they make holiday, dress themselves in their best, and go to the feeing-market at the next town. At such times they *do* indulge rather freely; and not unfrequently the market ends in a series of faction fights. Great efforts are now being made to do away with feeing-markets, and substitute registry-offices instead.

A certain kind of immorality, which undoubtedly prevails among the rural classes of Scotland, is the fruit of a system which is in other respects advantageous. The system raises the rate of bastardy, but it keeps down pauperism. For example: in the country districts of England, many of the labourers who work upon the farms, and earn from nine to twelve shillings a week, live in little houses of their own; which encourages them to marry. In Scotland, the labourers for the most part live with their masters in the farm-house, and take their wages partly in board and lodging. It is thus a disadvantage for a Scotch ploughman to be married; he cannot take his wife to his master's house; and a house for her own use would be an unnecessary expense, even if a small dwelling suitable for her could be obtained. The consequence is, that farm-servants in Scotland generally remain unmarried. The evil results will be obvious; but you do not find whole families in a district throwing themselves upon the parish; and in Scotland the degrading spectacle of labourers broken down with age and service, going up to some sentimental meeting of their masters to receive a prize of a pair of cord breeches for long service, and consequent destitution and helplessness, is utterly unknown. There is no poverty like that of the Dorsetshire labourer, among the same class in Scotland. A Scotch farm-servant gets from six to twelve pounds per annum, and his board and lodging. He has only to provide himself with clothes, and such luxuries as snuff and tobacco. When he is a bachelor, which he generally is, he has no care whatever as to the means of living.

The care and economy displayed in Scotch farming offer a marked contrast to the rude and careless modes of cultivation which are adopted on the richer soils of the south. The Scotch would not get a living out of their stubborn soil by the easy, happy-go-lucky style of tillage which prevails in some of the southern counties of England. Look at a Kentish plough and look at an Aberdeen one. The former, a rude lumpy arrangement of wood, little better than the tree which the Spaniard drags over his fertile field; the latter, a trim neat implement, constructed wholly of iron—light, manageable, and almost as precise in its operations as a mathematical instrument. Ploughing is a fine-art in Scotland. It is a ploughman's pride to rule a field with furrows as straight and regular as a copy-book. There is no waste of labour nor power. There are only two horses and one man to a plough. The carts, the harrows, the sowing-machines, are all constructed on the best principle, neat in form, regular—almost elegant—in action. There is nothing rude or clumsy about Scotch agricultural implements. All the new discoveries as to the chemical properties of manures, are well understood and generally acted upon. The earth is nursed like a weak child—taken on the knee, as it were, and fed with a spoon. The reward of all this tender care is often pitiful to behold. A field of turnips or potatoes with a score of barren patches; a field of oats whose straw in some parts is only a foot high, which is still hopelessly green when the snow begins to fall. In these northern districts which I am now visiting, whole fields are lost every year. The crop does not come up, or it does not ripen, or it ripens too fast and is thrashed out by the wind before it is cut. The people have a hard fight with nature here; but, though vanquished oft, they never despair. They are a philosophical as well as a persevering race.

The hospitality of the country people in Scotland is overpowering. Go where you will, into the castle of the laird, or into the cot of the peasant, you must eat and drink on the instant. No matter whether you are hungry and thirsty; no matter what the hour of the day. If there be nothing in the house but whisky, you must drink whisky. Whisky at early morn, whisky at noon, whisky at eve. Under the obligations of festive courtesy, which in this country hold it to be almost penal to shirk the whisky-bottle when it comes round, I am nearly killing myself drinking drams and tumblers of toddy. After a time I find it convenient to carry about with me a bottle of

citrate of magnesia, with which to cool myself down the last thing at night, and pick myself up the first thing in the morning.

Whisky in Scotland is a national institution. The implements for making toddy are household gods, which descend as heirlooms from one generation to another. Those implements consist of a brass or silver toddy-kettle, a quaint black whisky-bottle of the Dutch character, a certain number of stout tumblers with feet to them, little square or oblong doylies sacred to toddy, and a dozen or two of silver toddy-ladles. No householder considers himself completely set up in life, unless he possesses the proper implements for making and drinking toddy. And the consumption of this national compound is a grand ceremonial, a solemn sacrifice to Bacchus, conducted with great state and circumstance. The dinner is nothing, the toddy afterwards is everything. I have heard that my grandfather was always very impatient of the concluding courses of dinner. The cheese was a formula for which he had no toleration. He would never give any one an opportunity of taking cheese. He would say to the guests all round as fast as he could talk, giving no one a chance to reply, "Ye for cheese? ye for cheese? ye for cheese? Naebody for cheese, tak' awa' the cheese." And the cheese would be whipped away accordingly, the cloth cleared, and the implements of toddy set out on the polished mahogany. No dessert accompanies the after-dinner toddy-drinking in Scotland. Apples and pears, almonds and raisins, and such-like sweet fare, are considered fit only for women and children. It would be a desecration of the high and severe altar sacred to whisky, to place eatables of any kind upon it. The sacrifice admits of libations only. You are expected to put a glass and a half of whisky in every tumbler, and your host keeps his eye on you to see that you don't shirk. A wine-glassful and a half is the minimum which any one can venture to put into his tumbler without losing caste as a true Scot. If you cannot stand to your double-shotted tumbler, you are no worthy son of Scotia. But a little more is allowable than a glass and a half in a tumbler; and this wee drappie more is pleasantly called an "ekey." An "ekey" is given by a tremulous motion of the hand—allowed to be involuntary—just as the second glass is half full. You may happen to fill the glass; but it is only an "ekey," and doesn't count. There are many innocent diminutives used in Scotland to soften the name of whisky. It would sound very horrid and be unpleasantly suggestive of habitual intemperance, to be always asking for a "glass of whisky." So until it comes to the regular toddy-time, you take a "wee drappie," or a "thimbleful," or a "skitey," and you take it with an air of being troubled with a stomach complaint, and make faces after it as if you didn't like it, and only took it as a medicine. Under the name of a "drappie," or a "skitey," whisky tastes just as hot in the mouth, only you may persuade yourself and others that you haven't had any whisky. It is because whisky-toddy is an institution in Scotland, because it is consumed in high state, and because every household has its toddy gods, that we derive the impression that the Scotch are a people inordinately given to drink. I am inclined to believe, however, that there is quite as much drinking going on in London as in any town in Scotland. Scotchmen take a good deal of toddy after dinner, and perhaps a "skitey" with the forenoon's "piece" (Anglicè, lunch), but they are not in the habit of drinking at public-house bars. They take nearly all their drinks sitting round their own tables, and I question if the maximum number of tumblers exceeds the quantity which is sipped in "drops" and "drains" in English taverns by men who are regarded as models of moderation and sobriety. We may at least say this, that a Scotchman takes his drink like a gentleman.

Toddy-drinking in Scotland, however, is not so universal nor so religiously pursued as it was. An old fourteen-tumbler man complained to me lately, that the new race of Scotchmen were very degenerate. He was deploring bitterly that there was not a man in all Scotland now, who could take his fourteen tumblers.

"I canna think fat's come to the young men noo-a-days," he said; "they run awa' frae their toddy at the second tumbler, and jine the leddies—they're just becoming effeeminate."

NEW CHINA.

About the year 1854, Chinamen came over in shoals to the Australian colonies, dressed in a coarse dark-blue cotton, cut in the most primitive form. They were not flowery Orientals out of picture-books, which represent only mandarins and other high personages in full dress. I have a belief that the first tailor who made a Chinaman's slops worked for Noah. The upper portion is a smock, not so elaborate as the English peasant's smock-frock, but a short straight jacket buttoning down the front, and having long straight and tight sleeves. The jacket reaches to about the hips, and the sleeves come over the finger-tips, serving as cuffs and gloves, and being turned back during any active work. The trousers are a blue bag, through which a pair of brown bare miserable apologies for legs are thrust. When not barefoot, the poorer sort of Chinese wear cork-soled slippers with short toe-caps, but no heel-pieces or "lifts." Their heads are adorned with plenty of coarse coal-black hair, always neatly plaited into a long queue. Those who are short of hair, eke out the quantity and length by the insertion of black silk. Often this tail reaches below the bend of the knee, but ends usually where the monkey's tail begins. The hat of the working Chinaman is a machine most like the seat of a large cane-bottomed chair, puffed up into a conical shape, and lined with rushes and leaves. The figure of the Chinaman is not complete without his pair of panniers, round, and three feet deep. He places them, equally weighted, on the ends of a six-foot bamboo rod, secures

them to it with some mysterious knot, and poises the rod on his shoulder, so carrying his luggage; then proceeds on his journey at a slinging slipshod even trot—much like the trot of a tired butcher's hack, which gets over the ground at about four miles an hour, or rather less.

The early Chinese colonist, when he landed, looked for lodgings; and, to get them, all he did was to cut two upright sticks, with a fork at the top, from the nearest gum-tree or bush, place them in the ground about six feet apart, put another slender pole between them, and throw over all a sheet of dusky brown calico, which was pegged down to the ground at suitable intervals. The whole tent was four or five feet high, and afforded barely enough room for his narrow bed, which by day is rolled up, and always carried in one of the baskets before mentioned. All his cooking, washing, and laundry-work, which was of the smallest amount, he performed out in the open air. A large number of tents were pitched as close together as they inconveniently could be pitched, and all the inhabitants, frequently two or three to one tent, were huddled together less comfortably than sheep in their pens. In a short time, the refuse from this camp was strewed in and around it, and odours arose therefrom. The food consisted, in those early days, of rice, of which they invariably preferred the kinds not in repute among Europeans; they chose for their meat, legs and shins of beef, reduced to a sort of bouilli, together with an occasional morsel of pork as a treat.

The Chinese method of working was at first as peculiar as the other habits of these people, and loud and deep were the complaints of the European miners. They affected the "tub and cradle," and the washing pan. Instead, however, of sinking a shaft, John Chinaman delighted in raking up old "tailings," or refuse from a preceding digger's work, and putting them through his cradle, without using the tub at all. At other times, a system of "surfacing" was carried on to a large extent; which means that the men scratched up the surface soil to a depth of two or three inches or feet, and put it all through the cradle. The returns from such methods of mining, while thoroughly unsatisfactory to Europeans, were gladly accepted as sufficient by the less ambitious Asiatics.

A few of the most enterprising of these Orientals took up various portions of land in good sites, which were unalienated from the crown, and, fencing it round with closely-woven bushes, digged gardens, wherein they sowed lettuce, radishes, spring onions, cabbages, and gathered a rich harvest of profits. On the banks of the River Loddon, such a garden extends over at least twelve acres of ground. It is surrounded by a rough but secure fence. This is necessary, as there are many goats and cattle wandering about. A gate, wide enough to drive an American waggon through, leads to the house, which, in this instance, is built of weather boards. Outside the house, which is not larger than about twenty feet by twelve, is a sort of summer-house, built of leaves and branches of gum-trees, under which the lord of the mansion delights to take his frugal meals. The house is used only to sleep in, and very uncomfortable it must be, as it is parted off into a considerable number of tiny rooms, each fitted with bunks, after the style of our government emigration vessels. The entrance is guarded by two dogs, who bark and strain at their chains most furiously whenever an European shows himself. A stable for the horses (the Chinaman has a particular delight in horseflesh) forms one side of the quadrangle, the house another, and on the two sides is the garden fence. The garden is a model of its kind. The ground is laid out with neatness and regularity, and the vegetables are planted with mathematical accuracy. Being formed on the banks of the Loddon, and so close that the steep bank to the river-side enables the proprietor to dispense with a fence near the water, there is the required facility for irrigation—the secret of the Chinaman's success—two or three pumps being set up to raise the water to the level of the garden. From the pumps, the water is conveyed in troughs all over the ground, and into various small tanks which are sunk at the corner of each bed. From these the Chinese labourers draw water in the ordinary watering-pots, and early and late may be seen going about as wet as possible, and watering each little lettuce and cabbage with as much care as the European gardener gives to his rarest exotic. To protect the young and tender plants from the too fierce rays of the sun, these gardeners spread small squares of damp cloth over them. The cabbages are subject to the ravages of an aphis, which soon destroys the plant. The European, when his plants are thus attacked, quietly folds his hands and watches their destruction; but the Chinaman takes a strong mixture of soap, soda, tobacco, and other things, and with a small brush carefully washes over every leaf of every plant affected. By these means he rears his stock and brings into the market plenty of fresh young tender plants, when one is not to be obtained for love or money from an European. The Victorian gardeners refuse to be taught by the experience of previous failures, and the consequence is, that for a regular fresh and cheap supply of vegetables we are wholly dependent on the patient industry of the Chinese. In the Loddon garden, thirty-six men are employed. The headman vindicates his title by using his head only, preferring to keep his finger-nails long, and to employ the hands of others. When the vegetables of this garden are cut, they are placed in cane baskets, and taken to a large tub, where they are stripped of all waste or decaying leaves, carefully washed, and packed for sale in the baskets with as much cleanliness, care, and delicacy, as a Devonshire woman bestows on the packing of her butter for market. John Chinaman lifts a fresh crisp young lettuce as

"gingerly" as if it were an egg, and looks as regretfully at a broken leaf as if it were an infant's broken arm. From the Loddon garden, the labourers have to walk five miles to the nearest market, which distance they perform at their usual slinging trot. The salesmen bring their baskets home full of manure. In addition to the usual manure, they buy guano and bone-dust.

In the earlier days, Chinamen were wholly dependent on the European storekeepers for their supplies. Now every camp has one or two stores, the property of a Gee-Long, or Ah-Luck, or Mong-Feng. But they remain good customers to the Europeans, as they greatly affect European manners, customs, and dress, after they have been a short time in the colony. Not unfrequently they patronise theatres, concerts, or other amusements, and put in a splendid appearance at any procession or public demonstration. When the governors, for instance, have at different times visited the up-country towns, their Chinese subjects have always been most anxious to do full honour to the representative of royalty. They mustered in swarms, and brought with them splendid specimens of banners, flags, and decorations, which quite cast into shade the paltry attempts in the same line of European holiday-makers. The flags are not only far prettier in shape, but are of beautiful material, being of the richest silks, of various colours, so exquisitely contrasted or so delicately blended, as to please the artistic eye, and covered with embroidery of most elaborate character and workmanship. They let off a most liberal supply of crackers—an amusement they delight in—and deny themselves no opportunity of enjoying. They also, at intervals, favour the lieges with Celestial music, which, certainly, does not incline any of our colonial enthusiasts to ask for that "strain again." The instruments of music consist of reeds, arranged something like a primitive Pan's pipe, cymbals, and a tiny kettle-drum. On all these occasions, the Chinese have with good taste given up their European dress, and appeared as glorious as they could make themselves in their national costume: thus adding materially to the picturesque effect of the procession, and distinctively showing their numbers.

After their emigration to Victoria had continued for some years, the Chinese became tired of "all work and no play," and accordingly a company of dramatic performers arrived from the Flowery Land. Of course, as they were travelling from one camp to another, or rather from one English town to another, round which Chinamen had set up their clusters of tabernacles, they had no permanent place of performance, but conveyed their stage, properties, and theatre (in the shape of a large circular tent) from place to place. The dresses, and some of the other properties, with great display of jewellery, are really splendid; but they almost wholly dispense with scenery. They delight in feats of strength, and indulge in dangerous acrobatic exhibitions to a most alarming extent. They never repeat the same piece, for they appear to have an inexhaustible supply of dramas. It would be impossible for one who is but slightly acquainted with their language to discuss the merits of the actors, but if one may judge by the earnest enthusiasm of the audience, they must be excellent. On one occasion I had the benefit of an interpreter's version of the tragedy before me. It was made up of pretty equal parts of love, jealousy, revenge, and murder, and seemed thoroughly to rivet the attention and enlist the sympathies of the audience. An emperor made his appearance in the course of the piece; and the slow and dignified, yet imperious, way in which he lived and moved, and gave his orders, was a perfect illustration of what one could imagine to be the manners of an Oriental autocrat—half barbarous, half refined. The female characters were acted by boys. One, the young lady, Kat-si-sieno, who is deserted by her recreant lover, and who eventually hangs herself, was so intensely pathetic, that she (or he) wept, and the real distress infected the beholders. The performances are varied, and accompanied, as in our own theatres, by music; but the beating of the tom-toms, and the shrill sounds of the pipes and triangles, became such an intolerable nuisance to Europeans, that it was found necessary to forbid the musical portions of the entertainment after twelve o'clock at night. The other parts of the performance were usually carried on until one, two, or three o'clock in the morning.

In one or two of the up-country towns, several of the more adventurous Chinamen rented some old wooden houses in the worst part of the towns. Gradually the number of these increased until a "Chinese Quarter" was formed. Reasons over and above their peculiar smell, rendered these Chinamen anything but desirable neighbours; and in Castlemaine a local capitalist erected a brick cantonment, away from the other houses. This little place is a perfect town in miniature. It occupies about two acres of ground, has three or four streets, an arcade, and apparently any number of millions of inhabitants. There are a large number of stores, several restaurants, and one or two opium saloons. The owners of all these establishments are quite willing to let any person go over them, and indeed seem to take a pleasure in showing their wares, and explaining Chinese ways of management. Few of their dwellings have chimneys; but they are warmed with buckets of live charcoal. The excessive neatness of the arrangement of the stores, houses, and of their own dress, would lead one to suppose these Chinamen the cleanest people in the world, but they are terribly dirty in some respects. Were it not for the enforcement of some sanitary by-laws by the Europeans amongst whom they reside, their quarters would speedily become the hotbed of the "pestilence that walketh in darkness."

In this cantonment there is a tin-smith's shop,

where buckets, dippers, dishes, and pumps, are made by the imitative Chinamen, after the English and American models. There is a tailor's shop, where articles of clothing are made for those who are constant to the ancient style of dress, where the workman sits cross-legged precisely as an English tailor does, and draws out his thread with that peculiar jerk which tailors appear to think necessary to the effectual completion of their stitches. There is a doctor's shop or apothecary's, where the parcels have cabalistic characters on them, only intelligible to the vendor, and there is a shop which has no counterpart in the European community. There, sits an old Asiatic—one of the very few ever seen with grey hairs, and these are only the few which adorn his face, the rest being as black as a coal—grinding away with all his might from morning till night. The mill is of the most ancient kind, being a smooth stone hollowed out, into which the material he grinds is put, and then another stone is placed on it, and the contents are pounded and ground up to a powder or paste. The grist put into this mysterious mill is generally some kind of imported nut, the Chinese name of which is "fowline." It is startling to think that a means of grinding, possibly invented or adopted by the banished Cain and his descendants, should be in use here in this remote island continent in the nineteenth century of the Christian era.

Next door to this ancient specimen of humanity, I once heard sounds of music. On looking in, a young Chinaman was seen fingering the great-grandfather of all the violins. The instrument was a straight stick about three-quarters of an inch across, with a flat piece at the end, on which it rested. To the top of the stick were fastened two strings of catgut, which were again attached to the outer edge of the wood on which it rested, and a bridge served to keep the strings in proper tension. A bow of the simplest construction served to produce the most uniform monotonous melancholy sounds ear ever heard. The fingering was precisely that necessary in our violin playing; but it only seemed to produce a greater or less volume of sound of the same note. The instrument rested on the knee of the player, and was about a foot high, the bow being of the same length. The performer appeared to be thoroughly absorbed in his employment, and his solitary listener's face had, for a Chinaman, as delighted and animated an expression as might be produced on the face of an European by a first-rate performance of a sonata of Beethoven's.

The Chinese features are not usually mobile and expressive. There is an intolerable sameness in face, colouring, dress, and general appearance among the Victorian Chinese, as compared with Europeans. The race is so pure, that one sees nothing but black eyes, black hair, and brown skins. Though at first it is next to impossible to distinguish one individual from another, yet after a time it becomes easy to separate the gentleman (there are a few) from the peasant or boor, and the good from the bad, with nearly as much accuracy as in the case of Europeans.

VILLAGE HOSPITALS.

Public attention has lately been called to the utility of Village Hospitals, and Mr. R. A. Kinglake has given an interesting account of one established at a place called Wrington. The writer has felt the need of such an institution in a remote part of the country, and it may serve a good cause to state under what circumstances.

Amongst various cases of illness and accident which occurred there during this last autumn, a poor boy was kicked by a cow, and some of the small bones of his ankle were dislocated. He was carried home, a distance of some miles, by a friendly shepherd. The accident was treated as a bruise. The boy's mother could not be persuaded to send for the parish doctor until she had exhausted all her own remedies. "Wait a while," she said, day after day, "he'll be easier to-morrow, and we don't like to trouble the doctor till we've tried all else." At last, however, the doctor was called in; but the boy's leg was in so swollen a state by that time, that even he detected no dislocation. He pulled out a bottle of embrocation from his pocket, recommended rubbing and a bandage, and then drove away on his round of duty elsewhere.

When I called, on the same day, to inquire after the boy, it was getting dark, and I found the mother, without a candle, vigorously rubbing the wrong leg with the embrocation: to the half-concealed satisfaction of her son, who could not bear the least touch on the injured limb. As for a bandage, the poor people absolutely did not know what a bandage was. I bandaged the leg myself, but no improvement ensued; and after another week or two of suffering, the mother at length sent for a bone-setter, as she called him (or, as we should say, a surgeon), from the nearest town, who at once discovered what was the matter, and set the bones right in a few minutes, at a charge of ten shillings, which was paid. If there had been a village hospital in the neighbourhood, three weeks of suffering and loss of time and work would have been spared.

There is great delicacy of feeling, although much ignorance, among our poor people. "We don't like to disturb the doctor," they say; "we don't like to bring him three miles to see us, if we can help it." And they will walk the three miles, with a sick child in their arms, to save him an extra drive in his gig. When scarlet fever broke out in this village, I saw a child of three years old, with the rash thickly spread over her neck and shoulders, sitting on the same bench with the other children in the school." "It flies to the little ones," the parents said; "and if we shut them up to keep out of the way, the Lord can find them, if he wants them, just the same." This little child was soon too ill to come to school, and when I went to the

cottage where she lived, to ask after her, I found the door locked, and all the family out at work, except this young creature, whose small voice came quavering through a broken pane of glass in the window. "I'm in bed with the fever. Mother's gone a-gleaning. The door's locked, and you can't get in." I could see the flushed little face lying on the pillow; a teapot was placed within the child's reach, out of the spout of which she drank from time to time. We used to come and talk to her through the broken pane, and to hand her in little things to please her. At last, she got well. But another child, of the same age, a particularly sturdy little boy, was carried forth into the harvest-field with the fever upon him. There was no proper shelter at hand where the child could be left; there was no doctor or nurse at hand to explain nature's laws to his parents. They laid their child down under a hedge, while they went a-gleaning. There was a hot sun and a cutting wind. The patient took cold and died.

At the very same time there was a little boy in the house where I was staying, lying ill of the very same fever. He lay in an airy room, with his mother watching by his side. Disinfecting fluid was spread about the house. Bright fires burnt in the grates, the polished floors were uncarpeted, and fresh air blew through the open windows. The physician's well-appointed carriage stood at the door; and while he spoke cheerful words to the little patient lying smiling on his sheltered bed, the funeral bell began tolling for the burial of the village child. Close under the windows we could see the simple funeral procession turning into the churchyard. A small coffin, carried by four village schoolboys; a father and mother, two little sisters and a brother, sobbing as they followed it to the grave. Through the open windows sounded the old familiar words, "I am the Resurrection and the Life."

We left the window, and turned back to the bed. "The one shall be taken and the other left."

If a homely, inexpensive little hospital had been established in the village, this village child, humanly speaking, need not have died.

HALF A MILLION OF MONEY.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "BARBARA'S HISTORY."

CHAPTER LXXXVII. STILL IN PURSUIT.

Davis's stables were soon found; also Davis—Davis of the stable stably; all waistcoat, all pockets, all wide-awake, with a wisp of spotted cambric round his neck, a straw in his mouth, and no legs to speak of. This gentleman—not insensible to the attractions of her Majesty's profile in low relief on a neat pocket medallion—distinctly remembered supplying a fly on the morning in question. It was his large green fly, and he drove it himself. The gentleman desired him to drive to the Great Western Railway station. The lady was in deep mourning, and looked as if she had been crying. When they got to Paddington, the gentleman gave him half-a-crown over and above his fare. The luggage all belonged to the lady. A porter took it off the cab, and carried it into the station. Davis thought he should know the porter again, if he saw him. He was a tall, red-haired man, with only one eye. Did not hear it said to what station the lady and gentleman were going. Was quite willing, however, to go over to the Great Western terminus, and do what he could to identify the porter.

So Mr. Davis shuffled himself into a light overcoat, accepted a seat in Saxon's Hansom, and was forthwith whirled away to Paddington. The one-eyed porter was found without difficulty. His name was Bell. He remembered the lady and gentleman quite well. The lady left her umbrella in the first-class waiting-room, and he found it there. He ran after the train as it was moving away from the platform, but could not get up with the carriage soon enough to restore the umbrella. However, the gentleman came back to London that same evening, and inquired about it. Gave Bell a shilling for his trouble. The luggage was labelled for Clevedon. He was certain it was Clevedon, because he had labelled it with his own hands, and remembered having first of all labelled it Cleve, by mistake. Of all these facts he was positive. The incident of the umbrella had impressed them upon his memory; otherwise he did not suppose he should have retained a more distinct recollection of those two travellers than of the hundreds of others upon whom he attended daily. This testimony shaped Saxon's course. He dismissed Davis, recompensed Bell, and by two o'clock was speeding away towards the west.

It was the down express, and yet how slowly the train seemed to go! Leaning back in a corner of the carriage, he watched the flitting of the landscape and listened to the eager panting of the engine with an impatience that far outstripped the pace at which they were going. He counted the stations; he counted the minutes, the quarters, the half-hours, the hours. He had no eyes for the rich autumnal country. He saw not the "proud keep" of Windsor standing high above its antique woods; the silver-grey Thames, with its sentinel willows and wooded slopes; the fair city of Bath, seated amid her amphitheatre of hills; or Bristol, gloomy with smoke. All he thought of, all he desired to see, all he aimed at now, was Clevedon.

Shortly after half-past five, he reached Bristol; at half-past six he had arrived at his destination. There were flys and omnibuses waiting about the little station. He took a close fly, being anxious to avoid recognition, and desired to be driven to the best hotel in the place. There was but one—a large white house with a garden, overlooking the Bristol Channel. The day was waning and the tide was high on the beach, as Saxon stood for a moment among the flowering shrubs, looking over to the shadowy Welsh hills far away. The landlord, waiting at the door of the

hotel to receive him, thought that his newly arrived guest was admiring the setting sun, the placid sea with its path of fire, the little cove under the cliffs, and the steamers in the offing; but Saxon was scarcely conscious of the scene before him.

CHAPTER LXXXVIII. THE DAUGHTER OF OCEAN.

No Mr. Forsyth had been heard of at the Royal Hotel, Clevedon, and no lady whom any person belonging to the house could identify with Saxon's description of Helen Rivière. The head waiter, a middle-aged man of clerical aspect, suggested that "the gentleman should send for Mr. Slatter." Learning that Mr. Slatter was the superintendent of rural police, Saxon at once despatched a messenger to request his presence; whereupon the clerical waiter respectfully inquired whether the gentleman had dined.

But Saxon had neither dined nor breakfasted that day, nor slept in a bed for four nights past; so he desired the waiter to serve whatever could be made ready immediately, flung himself upon a sofa, and, overwhelmed with fatigue, fell profoundly asleep.

It seemed to him that he had scarcely closed his weary eyes when a strange voice awoke him, and he found the waiter shouting in his ear, the dinner on the table, and Mr. Inspector Slatter waiting to speak with him.

Mr. Slatter represented the majesty of the English law to the extent of some six feet three: a huge, bronzed, crisp-haired, keen-eyed giant, with a soft rich voice, and a broad Somersetshire accent. He had not heard of any Mr. Forsyth at Clevedon, and he was positive that no such name had been added to the visitors' list up at the Reading Rooms. He had, however, observed a lady in very deep black sitting alone on the Old Church Hill both yesterday and the day before. Not having been on the hill himself, Mr. Inspector Slatter could not say whether the lady was young or old; but that she was "a new arrival" he did not doubt. She had not been on the hill to-day. He had passed that way half a dozen times, and could not have failed to see her if she had been there. As to finding out where this lady might be lodging, nothing was easier. Mr. Slatter would guarantee that information within a couple of hours.

So Saxon sat down to his solitary dinner, and Mr. Slatter departed on his mission. Rather before than after the expiration of two hours, he came back, having ascertained all that he had promised to learn. Miss Rivière had, indeed, been at Clevedon. She arrived five days before, accompanied by a gentleman who returned to London by the next up-train, leaving her in apartments at Weston Cottage down by the Green Beach. This very day, however, shortly after twelve, the same gentleman had come to fetch her away to Bristol, and they left about two o'clock.

Saxon snatched up his hat, bade the inspector lead the way, and rushed off to Weston Cottage to interrogate the landlady. He was received in the passage by a gaunt spinster, who at once informed him that she was entertaining a party of friends, and could not possibly attend to his inquiries. But Saxon was quite too much in earnest to be daunted by grim looks and short answers; so, instead of politely requesting leave to call again at a more convenient opportunity, he only closed the door behind him, and said:

"I have but two or three questions to put to you, madam. Answer those, and I am gone immediately. Can you tell me in what direction your lodger was going when she left here?"

"If you will call again, young man," began the landlady, drawing herself up with a little dignified quiver of the head, "any time after twelve to-morrow"

"Gracious Heavens, madam, I may be a couple of hundred miles hence by twelve to-morrow!" interrupted Saxon, impetuously. "Answer me at once, I beseech you."

Protesting all the time that it was very extraordinary, very unreasonable, very inconvenient, the mistress of Weston Cottage then replied as curtly and disagreeably as possible to Saxon's questions. Miss Rivière and Mr. Forsyth had left her house at a little before two o'clock that afternoon. They took the twenty-three minutes past two o'clock train to Bristol. Where they might be going after that she could not tell. Having heard Mr. Forsyth mention the words "high tide," and "Cumberland Basin," she had guessed at the time that they might be about to continue their journey by water. This, however, was a mere supposition on her part, as she had only overheard the words by chance, while passing the drawing-room door. Mr. Forsyth, she had understood, was Miss Rivière's guardian. He did not arrive unexpectedly. It had been all along arranged that he should return to-day to fetch Miss Rivière away; and the apartments were only engaged for one week. Some of Miss Rivière's luggage, indeed, had never been taken up-stairs at all; and the rest was ready in the hall a good two hours before they went away. It was all labelled Bristol. Here the gaunt landlady's unwilling testimony ended.

By the time that Saxon got back to the Royal Hotel, it was close upon ten o'clock. The last train to Bristol had been gone nearly two hours, and he must now either take post-horses all the way, or drive to the Yatton junction, so as to catch the up-train from Exeter at fifty-five minutes past ten. Having taken counsel with Mr. Slatter, he decided on the latter as the more expeditious route, and in the course of a few minutes had paid his hotel bill, recompensed the inspector, and was once again on his way.

Then came the gloomy road; the monotonous tramp of hoofs and rumble of wheels; hedgerows gliding slowly past in the darkness, and now and then a house by the wayside brimming over with light and warmth. Next, the station, with the up-train just steaming in; porters running along the platform; first-class passengers peering out cosily through close-shut windows;

and the engine all glow, smoke, and impatience, panting for release. Here Saxon exchanged the dismal hotel fly for a warm corner in a dimly-lighted railway carriage, and so sped on again till the train stopped at the Bristol station, where he alighted, jumped into a cab, and bade the driver take him to Cumberland Basin.

The way to this place lay through a tangled maze of narrow by-streets, over lighted bridges, along silent quays, and beside the floating harbour thick with masts, till they came to an office close beside a pair of huge gates, beyond which more masts were dimly visible. There were lights in the windows of this office, the door of which was presently opened by a sleepy porter, who, being questioned about the boats which had left Cumberland Basin that day, said he would call Mr. Lillicrap, and vanished. After a delay of several minutes, Mr. Lillicrap came out from an inner room—a small, pallid young man, redolent of tobacco and rum, and disposed to be snappish.

Boats? he said. Boats? Very extraordinary hour to come there asking about boats. Did people suppose that boats went out from the Basin at midnight? Had any boats gone out that day? Absurd question! Of course boats had gone out. Boats went out every day. There had been a boat to Ilfracombe—that went at five; a boat to Hayle—at half-past three; one to Swansea, at half-past four; and the daily boat to Portishead at two. Any others? Oh yes, to be sure—one other. The Daughter of Ocean for Bordeaux—not a fixed boat. Went about twice a month, and started to-day about four.

For Bordeaux! Saxon's pulse leaped at the name.

"The Daughter of Ocean carries passengers, of course?" he asked quickly.

"Oh yes—of course."

"And there is a regular steam service, is there not, between Bordeaux and America?"

Mr. Lillicrap stared and laughed.

"To be sure there is," he replied. "The French service. But what traveller in his senses would go from Bristol to Bordeaux to get to New York, when he can embark at Liverpool or Southampton? Out of the question."

But Saxon, instead of arguing this point with Mr. Lillicrap, begged to know where he should apply for information about those passengers who had gone with the steamer that afternoon; whereupon Mr. Lillicrap, who was really disposed to be obliging, despite his irascibility, offered to send the porter with him to a certain booking-office where these particulars might perhaps be ascertained. So Saxon followed the man over a little drawbridge, and across a dreary yard full of casks and packing-cases to another office, where, although it was so long past business hours, a pleasant kind of foreman came down to speak to him. The books, he said, were locked up, and the clerks gone hours ago; but he himself remembered the lady and gentleman perfectly well. The lady wore deep black, and the gentleman carried a large carpet-bag in his hand. He recollected having seen the gentleman several days before. He came down to the office, and took the double passage, and paid the double fare in advance. They came on board a little after three o'clock—it might be half-past three—and the Daughter of Ocean steamed out about a quarter-past four. If, however, the gentleman would come there any time after eight to-morrow morning, he could see the books, and welcome.

But Saxon had no need to see the books now. They could tell him no more than he knew already.

CHAPTER LXXXIX. THE MAN OF THE PEOPLE.

ALTHOUGH he left Bristol by the first morning express, Saxon yet found that he must perforce wait in town till evening, before he could pursue his journey further. The early continental mail train was, of course, long gone ere he reached Paddington, and the next would not leave London Bridge till eight P.M. As for the tidal route viâ Boulogne, it fell so late in the afternoon, that he would in no wise be a gainer by following it. So he had no resource but to wait patiently, and bear the delay with as much philosophy as he could muster to his aid.

In the mean while, he was quite resolved to keep clear of his allies, and accept no aid from without. The clue which he now held was of his own finding, and the failure or success with which he should follow it up must be his own likewise. So he went neither to Lombard-street to learn if there were news of Laurence Greatorex, nor to Chancery-lane to consult with Mr. Keckwitch, nor even to his club; but, having looked in at his chambers and desired the imperturbable Gillingwater to prepare his travelling kit and have his dinner ready by a certain hour, the young man thought he could not spend his "enforced leisure" better than by taking William Trefalden at his word, and learning from Mr. Behrens' own lips the true story of the Castletowers mortgage.

The woolstapler's offices were easily found, and consisted of a very dreary, dusty, comfortless first floor in a dismal house at the further end of Bread-street. On entering the outer room, Saxon found himself in the presence of three very busy clerks, a tall porter sitting humbly on the extreme edge of a huge packing-case, a small boy shrilly telling over a long list of names and addresses, and a bulky, beetle-browed man in a white hat, who was standing in a masterful attitude before the empty fireplace, his feet very wide apart, and his hands clasped behind his back. Saxon recognised him at once—keen grey eyes, iron-grey hair, white hat, and all.

"Mr. Behrens, I believe?" he said.

The woolstapler nodded with surly civility.

"My name is Behrens," he replied.

"And mine, Trefalden. Will you oblige me with five minutes' private conversation?"

Mr. Behrens looked at the young man with undissembled curiosity.

"Oh, then you are Mr. Saxon Trefalden, I

suppose," he said. "I know your name very well. Step in."

And he led the way into his private room—a mere den some ten feet square, as cheerful and luxurious as a condemned cell.

"I must beg your pardon, Mr. Behrens, for introducing myself to you in this abrupt way," said Saxon, when they were both seated.

"Not at all, sir," replied the other, bluntly. "I am glad to have the opportunity of seeing you. You were a nine days' wonder here in the City, some months ago."

"Not for any good deeds of my own, I fear!" laughed Saxon.

"Why, no; but for what the world values above good deeds now-a-days—the gifts of fortune. We don't all get our money so easily as yourself, sir."

"And a fortunate thing too. Those who work for their money are happier than those who only inherit it. I had far rather have worked for mine, if I could have chosen."

Mr. Behrens' rugged face lighted up with approbation.

"I am glad to hear you say so," said he. "It is a very proper feeling, and, as a statement, quite true to fact. I know what work is—no man better. I began life as a factory-boy, and I have made my way up from the bottom of the ladder. I had no help, no education, no capital—nothing in the world to trust to but my head and my hands. I have known what it is to sleep under a haystack, and dine upon a raw turnip; and yet I say I had rather have suffered what I did suffer, than have dawdled through life with my hands in my pockets and an empty title tacked to my name."

"I hope you do not think that I have dawdled through life, or ever mean to dawdle through it," said Saxon. "I am nothing but a Swiss farmer. I have driven the plough and hunted the chamois ever since I was old enough to do either."

"Ay; but now you're a fine gentleman!"

"Not a bit of it! I am just what I have always been, and I am going home before long to my own work, and my own people. I intend to live and die a citizen-farmer of the Swiss Republic."

"Then, upon my soul, Mr. Saxon Trefalden, you are the most sensible young man I ever met in my life," exclaimed the woolstapler, admiringly. "I could not have believed that any young man would be so unspoiled by the sudden acquisition of wealth. Shake hands, sir. I am proud to know you."

And the self-made man put out his great brown hand, and fraternised with Saxon across the table.

"I know your cousin very well," he added. "In fact, I have just been round to Chancery-lane to call on him; but they tell me he is gone abroad for six weeks. Rather unusual for him to take so long a holiday, isn't it?"

"Very unusual, I think," stammered Saxon, turning suddenly red and hot.

"It is especially inconvenient to me, too, just at this time," continued Mr. Behrens, "for I have important business on hand, and Keckwitch, though a clever fellow, is not Mr. Trefalden. Your cousin is a remarkably clear-headed, intelligent man of business, sir."

"Yes. He has great abilities."

"He has acted as my solicitor for several years," said Mr. Behrens.

And then he leaned back in his chair, and looked as if he wondered what Saxon's visit was about.

"I—I wanted to ask you a question, Mr. Behrens, if I may take the liberty," said Saxon, observing the look.

"Surely, sir. Surely."

"It is about the Castletowers estate."

Mr. Behrens' brow clouded over at this announcement.

"About the Castletowers estate?" he repeated.

"Lord Castletowers," said Saxon, beating somewhat about the bush in his reluctance to approach the main question, "is—is my intimate friend."

"Humph!"

"And—and his means, I fear, are very inadequate to his position."

"If you mean that he is a drone in the hive, and wants more honey than his fair share, Mr. Trefalden, let him do what you and I were talking of just now—work for it."

"I believe he would gladly do so, Mr. Behrens, if he had the opportunity," replied Saxon; "but that is not it."

"Of course not. That never is it," said the man of the people.

"What I mean is, that he has been cruelly hampered by the debts with which his father encumbered the estates, and"

"And he has persuaded you to come here and intercede for more time! It is the story of every poor gentleman who cannot pay up his mortgage-money when it falls due. I can't listen to it any longer. I can do no more for Lord Castletowers than I have done already. The money was due on the second of this month, and to-day is the seventeenth. I consented to wait one week overtime, and on the ninth your cousin came to me imploring one week more. Lord Castletowers, he said, was abroad, but expected home daily. Money was promised, but had not yet come in. In short, one additional week was to put everything straight. I am no friend to coronets, as your cousin knows; but I would not desire to be harsh to any man, whether he were a lord or a crossing-sweeper—so I let your friend have the one week more. It expired yesterday. I expected Mr. Trefalden all the afternoon, and he never made his appearance. I have called at his office this morning, and I hear that he has left town for six weeks. I am sorry for it, because I must now employ a stranger, which makes it, of course, more unpleasant for Lord Castletowers. But I can't help myself; I must have the money, and I must foreclose. That is my last word on the matter."

And having said this, Mr. Behrens thrust his

hands doggedly into his pockets, and stared defiantly at his visitor.

Saxon could scarcely repress a smile of triumph. He had learned more than he came to ask, and was in a better position than if he had actually put the questions he was preparing in his mind.

"I think we slightly misunderstand each other, Mr. Behrens," he said. "I am here to-day to pay you the twenty-five thousand pounds due to you from Lord Castletowers. Do you wish to receive it in cash, or shall I pay it into any bank on your account?"

"You—you can pay it over to me, if you please, sir," stammered the woolstapler, utterly confounded by the turn which affairs were taking.

"I am not sure that I have quite so large a sum at my banker's at this present moment," said Saxon; "but I will go at once to Signor Nazzari of Austin-Friars, who is my stockbroker, and arrange the matter. In the mean while, if I give you a cheque for the amount, Mr. Behrens, you will not present it, I suppose, before to-morrow?"

"No, not before to-morrow. Certainly not before to-morrow."

Saxon drew his cheque-book from his pocket, and laid it before him on the table.

"By the way, Mr. Behrens," he said, "I hear that you have built yourself a pretty house down at Castletowers."

"Confoundedly damp," replied the woolstapler.

"Indeed! The situation is very pleasant. Your grounds once formed a part of the Castletowers park, did they not?"

"Yes; I gave his lordship two thousand pounds for that little bit of land. It was too much—more than it was worth."

Saxon opened the cheque-book, drew the inkstand towards him, and selected a pen.

"You would not care to sell the place, I suppose, Mr. Behrens?" he said, carelessly.

"Humph! I don't know."

"If you would, I should be happy to buy it."

"The house and stables cost me two thousand five hundred pounds to build."

"And yet are damp!"

"Well, the damp is really nothing to speak of," replied Mr Behrens, quickly.

"Let me see; I believe Lord Castletowers sold a couple of farms at the same time. Did you buy those also, Mr. Behrens?"

"No, sir. They were bought by a neighbour of mine—a Mr. Sloper. I rather think they are again in the market."

"I should be very glad to buy them, if they are."

"You wish, I see, to have a little landed property over in England, Mr. Trefalden. You are quite right, sir; and after all, you are more than half an Englishman."

"My name is English; my descent is English; and my fortune is English," replied Saxon, smiling. "I should be ungrateful if I were not proud to acknowledge it."

The woolstapler nodded approval.

"Well," he said, "I have lately bought an estate down in Worcestershire, and I have no objection to sell the Surrey place if you have a fancy to buy it. It has cost me, first and last, nearly five thousand pounds."

"I will give you that price for it with pleasure, Mr. Behrens," replied Saxon. "Shall I make out the cheque for thirty thousand pounds, and settle it at once?"

The seller laughed grimly.

"I think you had better wait till your cousin comes back, before you pay me for it, Mr. Trefalden. The bargain is made, and that's enough; but you ought not to part from your money without receiving your title-deeds in exchange."

Saxon hesitated and looked embarrassed.

"If you are afraid that I shall change my mind, you can give me fifty pounds on the bargain—will that do? People don't buy freehold estates in quite that off-hand way, you see, even though they may be as rich as the Bank of England—but one can see you are not much used to business."

"I told you I was only a farmer, you know," laughed Saxon, making out his cheque for the twenty-five thousand and fifty pounds.

"Ay—but take care you don't fling your money away, Mr. Trefalden. You're a very young man, and, begging your pardon for the observation, you don't know much of the world. Money is a hard thing to manage; and you have more, I fancy, than you know what to do with."

"Perhaps I have."

"At all events, you can't do better than buy land—always remember that. I do it myself, and I advise others to do it."

"I mean to buy all I can get in my native canton."

"That's right, sir; and if you like, I will inquire about those two farms for you."

"I should be more obliged to you than I can express."

"Not in the least. I like you; and when I like people, I am glad to serve them. You wouldn't be particular to a few hundreds, I suppose?"

"I don't care what price I pay for them."

"Whew! I must not tell Sloper that. In fact, I shall not mention you at all. Your name alone would add fifty per cent to the price."

"I shall be satisfied with whatever bargain you can make for me, Mr. Behrens," said Saxon, and handed him the cheque.

The woolstapler shrugged his shoulders impatiently.

"I must give you receipts for these two sums," he said; "but your cousin ought to have been present on behalf of Lord Castletowers. The whole thing is irregular. Hadn't you better wait while I send round to Chancery-lane for Mr. Keckwitch?"

But Saxon, anxious above all things to avoid a meeting with that worthy man, would not hear of this arrangement; so Mr. Behrens gave him a formal receipt in the presence of one of his clerks, pocketed the cheque, and entered Saxon's address in his note-book.

"As soon as I have any news about the farms, Mr. Trefalden, I will let you know."

With this they shook hands cordially and parted.

"I'll be bound that open-handed young fellow has lent the Earl this money," he muttered, as he locked the cheque away in his cash-box. "Confound the aristocrats! They are all either drones or hornets."

In the mean while, Saxon was tearing along Cheapside on his way to Austin-Friars, eager to secure Signor Nazzari's services while the Stock Exchange was yet open, and full of joy in the knowledge that he had saved his friend from ruin.

About two hours later, as he was walking slowly across the open space in front of the Exchange, having just left the Bank of England, where he had found all his worst fears confirmed in regard to the stock sold out by his cousin in virtue of the power of attorney granted by himself five months before, the young man was suddenly brought to a pause by a hand upon his sleeve, and a panting voice calling upon his name.

"Mr. Saxon Trefalden—beg pardon, sir—one half minute, if you please!"

It was Mr. Keckwitch, breathless, pallid, streaming with perspiration.

"One of our clerks, sir," he gasped, "'appened to catch sight of you—gettin' out of a cab—top of Bread-street. I've been followin' you—ever since he came back. Mr. Behrens directed me to Austin-Friars—from Austin-Friars sent on—to Bank. And here I am!"

Saxon frowned; for his cousin's head clerk was precisely the one person whom he had least wished to meet.

"I am sorry, Mr. Keckwitch," he said, "that you have put yourself to so much inconvenience."

"Bless you, sir, I don't regard the inconvenience. The point is, have you learned anything of the missing man?"

Saxon was so unused to dissemble, that after a moment's hesitation he could think of no better expedient than to ask a question in return.

"Have none of your emissaries learned anything, Mr. Keckwitch?"

"No, sir, not at present. I've had three telegrams this mornin'; one from Liverpool, one from Southampton, and one from Glasgow, all telling the same tale—no success. As for Mr. Kidd, he has taken the London Docks for his line; but he's done no better than other folks, up to this time. If, however, *you* have made any way, sir, why then we can't do better than follow your lead."

They were close under the equestrian statue of the Duke, when Saxon stopped short, and, looking the head clerk full in the face, replied:

"Yes, Mr. Keckwitch, I do know something of my cousin's movements, but it is my intention to keep that knowledge to myself. You can put a stop to all these useless inquiries. I shall now retain this matter in my own hands."

"Not excludin' me from assistin' you, sir, I hope?" exclaimed Keckwitch, anxiously. "Of course, if you have found a clue and it's your pleasure to follow it yourself, that's only what you've a right to do; but I'm a man of experience, and I've done so much already to . . . "

"I am obliged, Mr. Keckwitch, by what you have done," said Saxon, "and shall make a point of recompensing you for your trouble; but I have no further need of your services."

"But, sir—but, Mr. Saxon Trefalden, you can't mean to give me the go-by in this way? It ain't fair, sir."

"Not fair, Mr. Keckwitch?"

"After my toilin' all the summer through as I have toiled—after all the trouble I've taken, and all the money I've spent, wormin' out the secrets of your cousin's ways—you'd never have known even so much as where he lived, but for me!"

"Mr. Keckwitch," said the young man, sternly, "whatever you may have done, was done to please yourself, I presume—to satisfy your own curiosity, or to serve your own ends. It was certainly not done for me. I do not consider that you have any claim upon my confidence, nor even upon my purse. However, as I said before, I shall recompense you by-and-by as I see fit."

And with this, he hailed a cab, desired to be driven to his chambers, and speedily vanished in the throng of westward-bound vehicles, leaving the head clerk boiling with rage and disappointment.

"Well, I'm cursed if that isn't a specimen of ingratitude," muttered he. "Here's a purse-proud upstart for you, to step in and rob an honest man of his fair vengeance. Recompense, indeed! Curse his recompense, and himself too. I hate him. I wish he was dead. I hate the whole tribe of Trefaldens. I wish they were all dead, and that I had the buryin' of 'em."

Mr. Keckwitch repeated this agreeable valediction to himself over and over again as he went along.

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AT THE BAR.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "A CRUISE UPON WHEELS," &c. &c.

CHAPTER XXX. THE SCENT IMPROVES.

It becomes necessary now that the reader should be informed how that hasty note, which was mentioned in the last chapter, came to be written. And in order to this, he must consent to follow once more for a brief space the fortunes of Mr. Julius Lethwaite and his faithful follower and ally, Jonathan Goodrich. These two made all possible despatch on the road to Cornelius Vampi's place of abode. There was, indeed, every reason for haste. It was the night before the trial. Whatever had to be done, must be done promptly. Then there was the stimulant of hope to urge them on and keep them from flagging. There really did seem now to be reasonable ground for hope—hope that this terrible mystery might be at last cleared up. That discovery of the bottle had altered everything. To Julius Lethwaite, too, the mere fact of being employed in an attempt to serve his friends at such a crisis was a source of high gratification, and would have been so even if the prospect had been less encouraging than it now undoubtedly was.

For all the hurry of the moment, our friend did not neglect so fine an opportunity of analysing motive. "Ah," he thought to himself, as he and the old clerk hurried along the streets now somewhat deserted, "some people would think that I was acting out of pure philanthropy and love of my friends. I know better. It is the love of excitement, to begin with, and the desire of having a finger in the pie, that are urging me on. Nothing else, I am convinced. Excitement! why, it's like hunting down game to be on a track like this, and following out the scent as we are doing now. Half the actions that are called good in this world might be traced to those two motives—love of excitement, and the desire to have a finger in the pie."

Jonathan Goodrich was in his turn occupied, as his master was, with his own reflections. He was no friend to the art mystic, and he had vague doubts as to the propriety of having anything to do with one so devoted to its culture as Cornelius Vampi. As a soothsayer, he had no belief in Vampi at all. He looked upon his studies of the heavenly bodies, and his habitual endeavours to gain from them an insight into the remote future, with feelings that oscillated between contempt and horror. It was either a total mistake from beginning to end, or else, if there was anything in it, it was a practising of the occult arts, a tampering with witchcraft and necromancy, and, as such, an abomination in the eyes of all persons of well-regulated mind.

Lethwaite, who always gave the old man an opportunity of expressing his opinion, and, indeed, had a great value for it, invited him—now that he had finally settled that question of the motive by which he himself was at this time influenced—to say what he thought of the step they were now taking.

"Well, sir," replied the old fellow, always pleased to hold forth a little, "I've no opinion, as you're well aware, of Mr. Vampi's fortune-telling and predicting, and that sort of thing, because, in the first place, according to what you yourself have told me, for once that he's been right, he's been at least twenty times wrong, and because, in the second place, if he could foretel the future, it must be by some hocus pocus, which it doesn't become me to speak of, and which would be much better left alone. At the same time, setting all these pretensions on one side, and regarding him as a man with a right to an opinion like any one else, I've nothing to say against him; and if you think, sir, that his opinion in this case might be worth having, and might help in any way to bring this poor lady out of trouble, why all I say, sir, is, in Heaven's name let's have it."

Mr. Lethwaite was, no doubt, highly edified with this oracular utterance; but he made no remark, and Jonathan went on.

"At the same time, there is one suggestion which I would venture to make, if you'll allow me, and that is, that you'll say nothing to Mr. Vampi about this discovery which we've just made, nor give him any hint or clue to go by. I think, sir, according to my poor judgment, that it will be best not to tell him anything till he's just told *us* what he knows, and that it would be better that you should approach the subject in some roundabout way; and then, if what he says corresponds with what we know, it will be altogether more satisfactory to all parties afterwards."

Lethwaite reflected a little on what the old man had said, and agreed to act upon his advice. This colloquy brought them to the philosopher's door.

Cornelius Vampi was up-stairs in his labora-

tory, and occupied with that particular branch of hocus pocus, as the old clerk called it, which had to do with the production of the "elixir." His client had become more and more thirsty for this rejuvenising draught with every instalment which he had handed her; indeed, it was as much as he could do to keep pace with her appetite. Like old "Smagg," she had her seasons of doubt and her seasons of confidence, and our philosopher got the full benefit of both these moods. If a candid friend told her one day that she looked her age, the elixir and its composer came in for some very hard words, while, if on another occasion some flatterer assured her that she got younger every day, she had sweet words and soft smiles for both the philosopher and his mixture for some time to come.

The philosopher was always glad to see Julius Lethwaite, and just now he was particularly so, being, for him, in a desponding frame of mind.

"I think it must be the moon," he said, after complaining to his visitor of the condition of his animal spirits. "She's near the full, and I've always observed that at such times my mind is very much affected. I don't sleep so well, and am more excited than I could wish. I don't think we attribute half influence enough to the moon."

"Good Heavens! what nonsense!" said Jonathan Goodrich to himself. "The moon, indeed!"

"The poet Shakespeare," continued Cornelius, "who knew what he was about too well to doubt the planetary influences which work upon us, ascribes even the commission of deeds of violence to the moon's power. 'It is,' says he, 'the very error of the moon. She comes more near the earth than she was wont, and makes men mad.'"

"I have myself fancied at times," observed Lethwaite, reflectively, "that I have been subjected to lunar influences."

Poor old Goodrich uttered a low groan at this, and cast up his eyes to heaven.

"'Influences,'" repeated Vampi, taking no notice of the old man's ejaculation—"'influences,' why, it is a thing there can be no doubt about. Whence, otherwise, such words as moonstruck, lunatic, lunacy? I'll tell you what, sir, there's something awful about the thought of that pale, ghastly luminary hanging there in space, a great chaos of uninhabited mountains and valleys, and exhausted volcanoes and empty craters. It's my belief, sir, that it's the ghost of a dead world; and it's my advice to you to give it a wide berth, as you would any other ghost, and to keep out of the reach of its rays as much as ever you can."

"I believe you're right," said Lethwaite, musingly.

"There's my poor master infected now," thought Jonathan. "Mercy on us! what a pack of nonsense they talk!"

"I wonder," resumed Lethwaite, in the same speculative tone, "if the moon has had anything to do with the complication of troubles and disasters which have fallen on my poor friends Gilbert and Gabrielle Penmore?"

The philosopher turned round from the stove before which he was seated, at the sound of that name, and gazed at his visitor for some seconds in silence.

"'Penmore,'" he said, at last, "'Gabrielle Penmore'—why, that was the name spoken of by that poor deranged creature."

"What 'poor deranged creature?'" asked Lethwaite, eagerly.

"A woman who came here one day to ask me to work out a spell against some person of the name you have mentioned."

"Against Gabrielle Penmore?" asked Julius again.

"The same," replied the astrologer. "I met her subsequently by chance in the Old Bailey late at night. She said then that she had done without the spell which I had refused to give her. Her enemy was there, she said, in the prison; and she actually seemed to caress the very walls of Newgate."

"Great Heaven!" ejaculated Lethwaite, "how extraordinary is the mixed malignancy and fidelity of that woman!"

"Is she not mad, then?" asked Vampi.

"No more than you or I," was the answer.

"Then you know who she is?" asked Cornelius.

"I do not *know;* I can only guess. But putting together her desiring a curse on the name of Gabrielle Penmore, and her subsequent assertion that the person who bore that name was shut up in Newgate, I can only conclude that it must be Jane Cantanker. Can you describe her?"

"A woman of about fifty years of age, tall of stature and thin, with very black hair and dark fiery eyes. When not talking, her mouth was kept firmly shut, and she breathed by the nostrils only." Cornelius was a great observer.

"The description corresponds closely enough," said Lethwaite, after reflecting for a moment. "It must have been Jane Cantanker herself."

"And who is she?" asked the philosopher. "Who is Jane Cantanker?"

Mr. Lethwaite and the old clerk exchanged a glance of intelligence.

"The answer to that question," said the former, "involves us in rather a long story." With that he proceeded to relate a great part of those particulars with which the reader is already acquainted, dwelling at some length upon that part of the narrative which bore upon the circumstances of Miss Carrington's death, and the extraordinary mystery which hung over it.

Throughout the whole of the latter part of the narrative, but more especially from the moment that mention was made of the nature of the poison which had been found in the body of the deceased lady, and to which her death was attributed, Lethwaite could not help being struck by the extraordinary interest manifested by the astrologer in every word that was spoken, and the almost breathless emotion with which he listened. Two or three times, indeed, he seemed on the point of interrupting the narrative with

some question or remark; but he stopped himself, if indeed, this was really the case, and allowed the story to reach its termination before he spoke.

Even then he paused yet a while, and seemed to be running over what he had just heard in his mind, and comparing these facts with some that dwelt in his own memory. At last he said, very thoughtfully, and with an uncommon gravity:

"I cannot say certainly yet—and till I know more; but it appears to me that it is possible that I may be able to throw some light upon this extraordinary tale."

Lethwaite remained speechless for a moment in sheer amazement.

"In Heaven's name," he said at last—"in Heaven's name, Cornelius, consider what you are saying."

"I do consider," replied the philosopher "and it is because I do so that I speak, as you hear, with diffidence and mistrust. The reasons I have for thinking that it is possible that I may be possessed of information bearing on this case, you shall hear and judge of yourself."

"Quick—quick," said Lethwaite. And the astrologer went on.

"Do you remember that a short time since I was in the habit of receiving visits from time to time from a strange lady?"

"I remember it perfectly."

"And you used to joke me, if you remember, about the regularity of her visits, and the mystery which always attended them?"

"I remember every word we said about her."

"Well, now listen. Suddenly that lady's visits ceased, and that at a time when she had actually made an appointment with me for a future day—the day but one, in fact, after I last saw her."

"But what has this to do," cried Lethwaite, "with what I was telling you? Why should you imagine that this lady or her visits has anything to do with my story?"

"Because," replied Vampi, "the object she had in coming to me was to obtain supplies of LAUDANUM!"

"'Laudanum,'" echoed Lethwaite; and the old clerk took up the word, and repeated it in a fainter key.

"Yes, laudanum. Now you see why I thought that I might know something of importance to the issue of this case."

"But her name—what was the name of this lady?"

"That is what I never could find out," replied the philosopher.

An exclamation of bitter disappointment escaped from Lethwaite as he heard this discouraging announcement. It seemed fatal to his hopes. There was a silence of some duration. It was broken by Cornelius.

"What was the date of the lady's death by poison?" he asked, hastily.

"The twenty-seventh of January," was the reply.

Cornelius Vampi rose from the place where he had been sitting, and repaired to a large business-like-looking desk, which stood at the other end of the room. Opening this piece of furniture, he took out a small book, such as memorandums and appointments are kept in, and referred to one of its pages.

"Great Heaven!" he exclaimed, clapping the book to, and throwing it down on the desk.

"What is it?" cried Lethwaite. "What have you discovered?"

"It was on the twenty-sixth that she was here for the last time, and it was on the twenty-eighth that she was to have returned on her own appointment—an appointment which she has never kept."

Again there was silence. The three men looked at each other in dumb consternation.

"It must have been the same," said Lethwaite, at last. "But how will it be possible to set the question at rest?"

"The body," said Cornelius, "is it buried?"

"Some days ago," was the answer.

Cornelius reflected for a time. "There was a bag, or reticule," he said, "which she used to bring with her, which I could identify."

"Could you with certainty?"

"Yes; there was a crest engraved on the metal of the snap. It was a half-lion rampant, holding a sword in one of its paws."

"That is something," said Lethwaite, eagerly, rising as he spoke. "That must be inquired after at once. Stay," he added, suddenly, as if influenced by a sudden inspiration. "You remember her face?"

"Perfectly. She was ordinarily closely veiled; but once I asked her to unveil herself, and she did so. I remember the face very well. I saw it on another occasion as well, now I come to remember."

"Come with me," cried Lethwaite, unable longer to restrain himself. "Come with me at once. We must settle this question without a moment's delay."

Vampi was nothing loth, and in a few seconds the three men were out in the night air, and on their way to Beaumont-street.

It was Gilbert Penmore himself who, in the early morning, left in charge of the night-watchman that note which Gabrielle only received when the time came for awakening the prisoners.

CHAPTER XXXI. AT THE BAR.

AND now the day had arrived on which the trial of Gabrielle Penmore for the wilful murder of Diana Carrington was to begin. Whether the inquiry would terminate on this same day of its commencement was a doubtful matter, and those who knew best about such things, and had had most experience, were decidedly of opinion that it would not. There was great bustle about the court and its environs, and the number of persons got together to witness the issue of this important and interesting case was very great. The newspapers next morning had a great deal to say about the distinguished company assembled:

"We observed the following persons of note occupying conspicuous positions in the body of the court;" and then followed a long list of names and titles.

Such a case as this, it will easily be credited, could not fail to draw together a great crowd of persons, anxious not only to watch the course of the trial and to hear the verdict, but to see this lady, who, young in years, well connected by birth, of such attractive appearance and gentle bearing, was yet accused (incredible as it seemed) of that crime which the law has placed at the head of the list, as the worst of atrocities, and to the commission of which the punishment of death is still awarded.

Nor was this all. It had now got to be generally known that this young lady was to be defended on her trial by no less a person than her own husband. Yes; the barrister who was bound to watch the interests of his client with breathless care, to parry every thrust that should be made against her life (for it would be her life, and nothing less, that would be at stake), to defend her inch by inch, and step by step—this champion of her rights, this defender of her person, was the same who had plighted his troth to her at the altar, and sworn to love, honour, and protect her as long as he should live.

Could a more wondrous combination of things—could aught more calculated to stimulate men's curiosity—be conceived? Was it possible that a more enormous stake could be hazarded, a more tremendous issue hang in the balance? Throughout, the case had always excited the most powerful interest. The coroner's inquest, the application for the magistrate's warrant, every stage through which the thing had passed, had stirred the public curiosity strangely. The newspapers had been full of the case; it had been the talk of the clubs, and even of the drawing-rooms, for ladies were interested in the history of this young creature, who was involved in so fearful a danger, and over whom there hung so dark and profound a shadow. People could not believe that that gentle, delicate-looking girl, with the refined sensitive face, whom some had seen in person, while others were familiar with her features from the photographs in the shop-windows, could have been guilty of this foul and hideous crime—a crime, too, rendered doubly foul and doubly hideous by the treachery which accompanied it. Society had to some extent taken the case up. Society did not know her exactly, but it knew *about* her, while about her husband and his family it was even better informed yet. There were old fellows who had been contemporaries of his father, and who would revive their recollections for the occasion. "Penmore! oh yes, I knew Penmore well enough, and an uncommon fine young fellow he was, too. We were both in the 28th together. Ah dear, yes, he suffered a good deal at the time when the great depreciation in West Indian property took place. And then they gave him that appointment, and one saw no more of him. Poor fellow! and so this Mrs. Penmore, that there's all this fuss about, is his son's wife. God bless my soul, what a dreadful thing!"

It was at a London dinner-table that these reminiscences were elicited from a certain Colonel Styles, an old retired officer, who had once, as he said, served with Governor Penmore, then a subaltern in a marching regiment. People who could call up such memories as these were at this time very welcome in general society, while any one who had actually known or come in contact with Gilbert Penmore or his wife personally was quite eagerly sought after. As for Julius Lethwaite, his friends were ready to tear him to pieces from the moment that it became known that the heroine in this terrible drama was numbered among his friends, and that her husband was his constant associate.

Even his descent in the social scale, from being a rich merchant and a sleeping partner with nothing to do, to occupying the post of artist on the drums in the orchestra of the opera, could not deprive of his social importance the man who was actually the companion of the two persons about whom society was at that moment so keenly interested, and Lethwaite might have dined out every day of his life on the strength of his friendship for the suspected murderess and her husband and advocate, if his professional engagements would have permitted it, and if the state of his spirits, much depressed by his friend's misfortunes, had not wholly unfitted him for the gossip of the drawing-rooms.

It was a crowded court. Every available inch of ground was utilised, and the space usually set aside for official purposes was encroached upon to the very utmost. Even the members of the public press were scarcely allowed elbow-room, and, accustomed as they were to niche themselves into corners, were apt to complain of the want of accommodation. These gentlemen were, as usual, busy already before the work of the day began. Some were gleaning information from lawyers of their acquaintance; some were extracting interesting particulars from officials connected with the prison; some were laying their heads together imparting their information mutually to each other; while some old stagers were making themselves comfortable, getting their pens and ink ready, and seating themselves in such wise as that they could see, hear, and write with the greatest convenience. They had their work cut out for them. This trial was an important one, and the public would be jealously on the look-out for closely observed details and accurate description of everything that happened. The "on dits" that were in circulation in connexion with this case were on a most extended scale, and had to be scrupulously canvassed by the gentlemen of the press before it could be thought right to give them admission to the honours of print.

"Is it true," the Evening Gun would ask, addressing himself to a neighbour, "that a very high personage sent down to the prison to say that the very best counsel that was to be had

should be provided free of expense, if the accused wished to avail herself of it?"

"Not a word of truth in it."

"It was hinted in the 'Reliable Rumours' column of the Vigil," retorted the first speaker.

"Then you may be sure it isn't true. Their plan is a simple one. They invent a thing and publish it in large type one day, and contradict it in small print the next. And a very good plan too."

"I'll tell you what *is* true, though, and no mistake," remarked the Evening Gun again, "and that is, that the different flower-shop people in Covent Garden have clubbed together to keep the prisoner supplied with bouquets ever since the day of the inquest."

"You don't say so!" remarked the reporter for the Early Bird, note-book in hand.

"I do, indeed. You may rely on it perfectly, just as you may on the fact that the Lady Violet Ammonia has sent her a magnificent golden smelling-bottle, set with rubies, and full of the most pungent salts that could be got—expressly for the trial."

"You don't say so!" urged the Early Bird again.

"Yes but I do. You'll see it at the trial."

The Bar had its gossip and its talk in connexion with the great case, as the reporters had.

"No change about the defence, I suppose?" asked a gentleman whose black eyebrows and whiskers formed a striking contrast to his white wig and pale face, and who leant over as he spoke to secure the attention of one of the attorneys in court; no other, indeed, than our friend Mr. Craft.

"No, I believe not. He's determined that nobody shall get her off but himself."

"Is it true that Vellamy offered to defend her?"

"Yes, I had it from himself; but Penmore declined him very courteously, and said that his wife was still determined to trust to her husband, and nobody else."

"And is he sanguine about it, do you know?"

"Very, I'm told. I understand that some new evidence has turned up at the eleventh hour—evidence of the most vital importance, and which can't fail to affect the case materially."

"Did you hear what it was?"

"No; but we shall know before long, now."

All this time the commotion and noise in court were very great. It was more than full, and, except the places which were kept for those who held office, there was not a vacant square foot to be seen anywhere. The buzz and confusion was at its height; everybody seemed to be talking at once, and all in a high state of excitement, when in one moment there came a sudden lull, and all eyes were suddenly turned in one direction to where the figure of a pale young man with rather a yellow face, and wearing a wig and gown, was seen advancing slowly and with difficulty towards the place reserved for him on the barristers' benches.

The public might well gaze after this gentleman; for the rumour which went through the court like an electric flash, that he was the "counsel for the defence," was nothing more nor less than the truth.

Our friend Gilbert moved and looked almost like one in a trance. And I think it is probable that he was wrought up to such a high pitch of nervous excitation, that the court, and the people, and all things around, would appear but indistinctly before him—dim, and uncertain, and wavering.

He was very, very pale, but hardly nervous and not embarrassed at all. Embarrassment is for small occasions, not for such moments as these. A man may be embarrassed when he returns thanks for the drinking of his health, not when he pleads for the life of one whom he loves.

Penmore took his place, holding such papers as he required in his hand. There was no fussy turning over of briefs, or conversation with attorneys; no referring to law-books. All that was done long ago. Such actions are often resorted to by persons who feel that all eyes are fixed upon their movements. If all eyes were fixed on Gilbert Penmore, he did not know it, or, knowing, was entirely indifferent. He was here in the lists. His dear Gabrielle was in danger, and he was to fight for her. Let those look on who liked. They were invisible to him.

There was a gentleman in a very old gown, and a wig that fitted him ill, who was seated next to Gilbert, and who was evidently engaged in the case. It was his friend and colleague, Mr. Steel.

These two spoke together now and then in whispers, but for the most part they were very silent.

It is not enough to say that the court was full. The very purlieus of the court were encumbered with those who, unable to gain admittance themselves, drew their supplies of information from those who were more fortunate, receiving notice of everything that happened from persons within, and in turn passing it on to those who were yet further off from the great centre of attraction.

"He's come in," one of these retailers of second-hand information would exclaim upon the entry of Penmore as just described—"he's come in, Bill."

"Who's come in?" inquired the person thus addressed.

"'Er 'usband," was the answer.

"'Ow does he look?"

"Hoffle pale."

And so the arrival of each new actor in this terrible drama was proclaimed, and his or her appearance commented on.

For all things were now ready. The members of the Bar were seated. The reporters were ready with their pencils in their hands, and their paper fastened down with elastic bands. The gentlemen of the weekly press, whose business was less to report the trial than to note the peculiarities of the scene, and to record it in its more

popular and picturesque aspect, were ready with their note-books, as the artists with their sketch-books. The ushers were in their places, ready to enforce silence.

In another moment it was proclaimed aloud, and, a small door on the dais at the upper end of the hall being opened, the judges came into court.

There were two of them. One—it was he who entered first—was a very old man of a most noble and worshipful appearance, such as one seldom sees. He was of somewhat tall stature, and inclining to be thin; but his figure was still good, and his judge's robes fell gracefully and nobly about him. His face was very pale and full of lines, which seemed all to tell of thoughtfulness and gravity. The features were as entirely delicate in formation as they could be without incurring any charge of effeminacy, from which, indeed, they were entirely free, as they were from all approach to weakness; indeed, the under-jaw was remarkably prominent, and with the keen piercing eyes made the face to be one full of magnificent power. It was a countenance which had been long in arriving at so much of perfectness. It had taken upwards of seventy years to build it up to what it was now. The office of a judge is perhaps the most god-like function which man has to fulfil upon this earth, and this one was the beau-ideal of what a judge should be.

His companion on the bench was a gentleman in the very prime of life, who had reached this high position at a much earlier period than is at all usual by the exercise of rare abilities combined with indefatigable industry and perseverance. The old judge and the young judge sat side by side, and there was that in their appearance which gave a very guarantee that entire justice should be done to any who might come that day before them. They had only just taken their seats, and the hum of conversation caused by their entrance had only just subsided, when a new sensation seemed to run as by one consent through the whole vast assembly, and all eyes, turning simultaneously in one direction, saw that a certain space which had hitherto remained vacant in that crowded court was filled up, and that the prisoner was placed at the bar.

They put a chair for her in the dock; and this, indeed, was necessary, for her knees trembled so under her, that it would have been impossible for her to stand. She sat there quite quietly, with her hands joined together and lying in her lap, and her head bent forwards. There was not much to gratify public curiosity. She wore her usual quiet out-door costume, and her veil was drawn down over her face. But it was a pathetic little figure in that big place, and with such an array drawn out against her. It was a terrible ordeal, and to have all those eyes fixed on her alone was enough to have daunted a stronger woman than this. But this was not all. Those eyes were fixed upon her because she was the central figure of a drama of surpassing and dreadful interest—because her young life was in danger, and hung upon the issue of the investigation which was now beginning. The reader must not blame this woman for *being* a woman, nor think the worse of her, because she does not come forward boldly to assert her innocence by looking her accusers and the world in general proudly in the face.

When the trial actually commenced, Gabrielle tried to stand, but it was entirely impossible at present, and she was compelled to seat herself again just as she was before. Once she raised her head; it was to look for her husband's face, but she could not make him out in the crowd of barristers, and was obliged to give it up. She had seen, however, in that brief glance the figure of the old judge, and had observed that his countenance, as he looked on her, was full of concern and pity; and from that moment she felt a greater degree of calmness, and a strange feeling of support and hope.

It is probable that on this great and terrible occasion all that took place was to her dim and unreal, that much passed which escaped her altogether, and that there was a strange indistinctness about what she saw and what she heard. The habitués of the Old Bailey eat and sleep pretty tolerably when their lives are in danger; but this poor lady had not been able to do either, and she was miserably weak and exhausted. The habitués, too, are calm and collected when on their trials. It was not so with Gabrielle.

Even the horrible words of the indictment, as the officer of the court read them out, lost some of their terror to her by reason of this semi-stupor which was upon her. She hardly heard the accusation that she did, on a certain day in January last, kill and slay one Diana Carrington, by administering to her a certain poisonous drug, called laudanum, in sufficient quantity to destroy life, or, hearing, realised but faintly what the accusation meant.

And now the jurymen have settled themselves in their places as men do who are powerfully interested in the scene before them. There is the customary amount of whispering going on among them. There is the usual obstinate and thick-headed-looking individual there who is never absent, any more than the fussy man who sees a great many things which escape other people, and which, indeed, have no existence except in his own imagination. He is the same man who takes notes so ostentatiously, and who asks questions simply for the sake of showing his own cleverness.

And now the counsel for the prosecution got up in his place, and proceeded to draw the attention of these men to his view of the facts of the case. He was a shrewd, careful man, and seemed disposed to make the very most of the terribly strong evidence at his disposal.

"I find," he said, after a few preliminary words, in which he adverted to the great peculiarity of the case, and entreated the jury not to let any feeling of interest in the prisoner, or sympathy for her terrible and almost unexampled

position, affect them in their opinion as to her guilt or innocence. "I find," said this gentleman, after speaking for a considerable time on the nature of the case, "that, on a certain day at the end of last autumn, the deceased lady, Miss Carrington, came to reside at the house of Mr. and Mrs. Penmore, the former of whom was her first cousin once removed. The persons thus brought together do not appear to have lived on very happy terms. Into the merits of the case on either side it is not necessary or desirable that I should enter. Be these what they may, certain it is that there was some amount of ill feeling between Miss Carrington and the prisoner, that it broke out from time to time, and that on one occasion more particularly it amounted to a serious disagreement. That disagreement was followed by the sudden and unexpected death of Miss Carrington, under circumstances of something more than a suspicious kind. I shall be able to prove, by the testimony of the witnesses who will presently be examined before you, that the prisoner had, on the evening of the day on which that disagreement to which I have alluded took place, an opportunity of supplying Miss Carrington with meat and drink, that she had also an opportunity of introducing into such meat and drink any foreign matter with which she might desire to qualify it, and that in the course of the night on which Miss Carrington partook of that refreshment which was conveyed to her by the prisoner, or early on the following morning, Diana Carrington breathed her last, poisoned, as the medical evidence shows, by a drug, a considerable quantity of which was found in the possession of the prisoner."

Serjeant Probyn then proceeded to call his witnesses, with a view of proving, as the custom is, what he had just been advancing. The first of these was no other than the wretched Charlotte, the servant-of-all-work. She was called to prove the arrival of Miss Carrington at the house in Beaumont-street, and the fact of her residence there, which was done something in this wise. The first few preliminary questions as to her name (which, by-the-by, was Grimes), her occupation, and the like, having been disposed of, the inquiry followed:

"Do you remember the day of Miss Carrington's arrival?"

Witness. Yes, sir, I do.

Serjeant Probyn. You had many extra things to do, no doubt?

Witness. Yes, sir.

Serjeant Probyn. What time did the lady arrive?

Witness. In the evening, sir.

Serjeant Probyn. On the evening of the 29th of November?

Witness. Yes, sir.

Serjeant Probyn. Can you remember any circumstances connected with her arrival?

Witness. I was out when she arrived, sir. But I came back afterwards.

Serjeant Probyn. And when you came back, do you remember anything of what was going on? Did everything seem comfortable between Miss Carrington and your mistress?

Witness. No, sir. Miss Carrington didn't seem to like anything that was done for her, and complained a good deal.

Serjeant Probyn. And your mistress was, naturally enough, a little irritated by so many complaints?

Witness. No, sir, she wasn't. She took it like a hangel.

[At this unintentional rebuff there was some manifestation in the court of a tendency towards laughter. It was at once suppressed, however.]

Serjeant Probyn. Miss Carrington was accompanied by a servant, was she not?

Witness. Yes, sir.

Serjeant Probyn. Did she seem as little satisfied as her mistress?

Witness. She was the worst of the two, sir.

It was evidently the object of the serjeant to prove that from the very first there had been a great amount of provocation inflicted on the unhappy Gabrielle, thus gaining more and more strength of motive for the act of which it was his business to prove her guilty.

"In fact," said the serjeant, in that off-hand manner of taking things for granted which is so common among the brotherhood—"in fact, they both provoked your mistress very much?"

"They was both very provoking, sir," replied the witness, after reflecting a little; "but my mistress was that gentle and patient that they couldn't make it out to quarrel with her."

"You may stand down," said Serjeant Probyn. "Call the next witness." He had got all he could out of this last one, and the poor faithful drudge had done less for him than he expected.

The next witness was Jane Cantanker.

The greater part of what she had to say is already known to us, and much of it need not be repeated. The whole body of her evidence, as eliminated by Serjeant Probyn, was certainly of the most damnatory kind, and it was easy to see that it told not a little upon the jury. It was not difficult to gain abundant proof of motive out of this witness. She seemed to remember every word that had ever dropped from Gabrielle's lips which could give the faintest indication of impatient feeling towards her mistress, such as that which arose from Miss Carrington's habit of making known all her wants, connected with the house arrangements, to Mr. rather than to Mrs. Penmore. All that she had overheard of the conversation between the husband and wife when Miss Carrington was the subject of their talk, was shamelessly reproduced; and every little petulant expression used by Gabrielle, words spoken, some half in fun, some without thinking what they meant, was brought up here in court, and made to wear a serious, even a malignant aspect. She did not care—the terrible vindictive woman—how her evidence told against herself. She did not care who knew that she had listened at doors to conversations which she had no right to over-

hear. Let her but gain this point of bringing the woman whom she believed to be guilty to justice, and mankind might think of her—the instrument of vengeance—as mankind felt disposed. The force of her evidence was terrific; and when she came to speak of that scene with the photograph, in which she endeavoured to show that Gabrielle's feelings of jealousy had been so powerfully aroused, when she told of the sad scene at table on that last dreadful day, it was plain to all men that the case for the prosecution wore a terribly strong look. Between her readiness to tell, and the dexterousness with which the counsel for the prosecution drew her information from her, there came at last to be nothing left unsaid, while much that was not said in so many words was artfully suggested.

Some of her evidence was so powerful, seemed so convincing in the very manner of its coming from her, that a passage here and there may perhaps be worth preserving, in order that the reader may be able to judge what sort of aspect the strange case wore, to those who were present in court, as it went on from point to point. Serjeant Probyn had of course a "learned friend" with him, by whom much of the examining of the witnesses was conducted. Mr. Pry was a middle-aged junior, famed for his powers as an examiner and cross-examiner. He took Jane Cantanker in hand at an early period in her examination in chief. His questions and the answers eliminated by them were something of this sort:

Mr. Pry. You remember, no doubt, the leading incidents of the evening of January 25th?

Witness. Yes, sir; I remember everything that took place. (Pronounced "everythink.")

Mr. Pry. Will you be good enough to tell the jury what happened?

Witness. I took my mistress up a cup of tea about eight o'clock, when she seemed much in her usual health. I asked her permission to step out for a few minutes, which she gave immediate, saying that she would not want anything of me now till tray-time, as we call it. My mistress never ate anything with her tea, but had a light supper the last thing at night instead. I left her sitting quite comfortable in her easy-chair, and then I went out to make a few purchases, some eggs for mistress's supper among the rest. I was out about an hour. When I came home I asked the girl Charlotte if my mistress's bell had rung, and hearing that it had not, I did not go up to see after her, but did a bit of mending of my own, and then began to make the necessary preparations for getting ready the tray and that, to take up-stairs.

Mr. Pry. It was not possible that anything unusual might have got into the food, I suppose?

Witness. Oh no, sir. I was always most particular about everything that was intended for my mistress to eat or drink.

Mr. Pry. Just so. You had no laudanum ever in your own possession, had you?

Witness. Oh dear no, sir. Nothing of the sort.

Mr. Pry. You may go on now with what you were telling us, if you please.

Witness. I was just finishing the eggs which I had been poaching, when I heard the dining-room door open (it was but a little house we lived in, and you could hear in one room of it pretty well everything that took place in any of the others); the door opened, and Mrs. Penmore's footsteps descended the kitchen stairs. It was very unusual for her to come into the kitchen, I will say that; and I looked at the gurl Charlotte, and she looked at me hard, as much as to say, "I wonder what's up now?"

Mr. Pry. You will tell the court what happened next, as briefly as possible.

Witness. Sir, I wish to be brief, but I thought you were wishful to know all the particulars from the beginning to the hend.

Mr. Pry. So we are, no doubt. You were saying——

Witness. I was saying that Mrs. Penmore came down the stairs, and into the kitchen, and began talking ingratiatory like, as if she'd some favour to ask, and so it seemed she had; for it came out presently that she wanted to be allowed to take my usual office upon her, and carry up my mistress's supper to her room. [At this point there seemed to be a slight movement in court, caused by people turning about to look at each other, with a shake of the head. There was also a whisper exchanged here and there.]

Mr. Pry. And did you consent to this?

Witness. No, sir, I did not. I said I had always been in the habit of taking it up myself, and that I saw no reason for allowing any one else to do so.

Mr. Pry. And did the prisoner continue still to urge you?

Witness. Yes, sir, she did.

Mr. Pry. And was she very pressing about it?

Witness. Yes, sir, she was. She went on so, and pressed so hard, even taking the very tray out of my hands, as true as I am here, that I was almost forced to give way at last, which I did, but objecting all the time, and wondering, too, at her being so anxious about so small a matter; and I stood at the foot of the stairs after she had gone up, half doubting even then whether I wouldn't follow her, and get the tray back again. But I was undecided like for the time, and I stopped where I was. As I stood there at the foot of the stairs, I heard the prisoner [a word spoken with great relish] going up, and heard the jingling of the tray also; but it stopped when she got to the first floor, and then she opened the drawing-room door and went in.

Mr. Pry. Was that room on the same floor as the bedroom of the deceased?

Witness. No, sir. It was on the floor below it. She stopped in the drawing-room some time, and then——

Mr. Pry. How long do you suppose she stopped there?

Witness. Well, sir, it's difficult to say, but I should think three or four minutes. After that

I heard her come out, and once more begin ascending the stairs which led to my mistress's room. Then she paused again a little while, and then she tapped at the door and went in. [The witness seemed agitated here, and stopped for breath.]

Mr. Pry. After that, I suppose you heard nothing more?

Witness. I knew nothing more, sir, till the time came when my mistress's bell rang, and I went up-stairs to answer it.

Mr. Pry. And did you find the prisoner in the room with the deceased?

Witness. Yes, sir, but she left almost immediately.

Mr. Pry. And you remained behind?

Witness. Yes, sir. I remained with my mistress, except for a very short interval, till she went to bed.

Mr. Pry. Do you remember any remark she may have made on that evening—anything in connexion with the refreshments of which she had been partaking?

Witness. Yes, sir. She made an allusion to the porter, which, in consequence of previous complaints, I had got at a new public-house. She said that it had a very nasty taste.

Mr. Pry. Were those her exact words?

Witness. They were, sir. Her very words. A "very nasty taste," she says.

Mr. Pry. Had you any suspicions, now, at this time?

Witness. No, sir. None in the least.

Mr. Pry. So little so, that you cleared the dishes and washed out the jug which had contained the food and drink provided for the deceased lady's supper?

Witness. Yes, sir. I washed them up, as I was in the habit of doing, as soon as I brought them down stairs, and while my mistress was preparing for bed.

Mr. Pry. How long were you absent from her?

Witness. From twenty minutes to half an hour.

Mr. Pry. Did you notice anything remarkable about your mistress?

Witness. She seemed very sleepy and drowsy like.

A juryman—the same who took the copious notes—here interposed to inquire whether it was ever the case that porter was adulterated with laudanum; but he was met with the objection that such adulteration would scarcely pay, inasmuch as any preparation of opium that could be used for the purpose would be very much more expensive than the best legitimate materials which could be made use of in the manufacture of beer.

The reader will not fail to perceive how close and complete this evidence was. It was terrible to see what a suspicious aspect that act of taking up the deceased lady's supper wore when it came thus to be spoken of as a matter of evidence given in a court of justice. Nor was this testimony rendered less terrible by the manner of its delivery. Of the animus entertained by the witness towards the accused there could be no doubt, every time that the word "prisoner" was used, a noticeable expression of triumph declaring itself on the witness's countenance.

It was now time for her cross-examination to begin. But for that we shall require a new chapter.

HOPEWARD BOUND.

The seventh of November, in this current year, was one of those aggravating days upon which Mr. Timid does not go abroad without his umbrella, but, having it with him, is perpetually doubtful whether to carry it furled or unfurled. I saw him on that day steering his way over the trackless expanse of the grass in Hyde Park, or over a trackless part of it; now in full sail before the wind, with his head snug in his umbrella, yet not snug enough, for it rained and it did not rain. Irritating specks of damp were dancing about like deliquescent gnats in the raw wintry air. It was not worth while, or it was of no use, to put up an umbrella. Down came, therefore, Mr. Timid's press of sail, and he went uncomfortably forward over the damp grass till there were drops of damp big enough to form plum-pudding patterns upon seats and rails, stingy plum-pudding patterns, with the currants few and far between. Then Mr. Timid, not for his own sake but his hat's, opened sail again, till, as he crossed the road near the bridge over the Serpentine, towards which he had been steering, the apparition of a solitary rider taking a morning constitutional through that dreary November air, terrified the little gentleman. He was terrified lest he should, by crossing before it with an umbrella opened, fatally terrify the horse. So he closed the umbrella with a sudden snap under the horse's nose, and hurried on without daring to look at the consequences. I saw him look hard in the opposite direction for the ducks; but the ducks could make nothing of such a day, and were in solemn congregations, perhaps praying for rain or fair weather, one of the two, for this was neither. It didn't particularly rain; there wasn't particularly a fog; it wasn't particularly cold, and it wasn't particularly windy; but there was the ghost of a rainfall hovering in and out of the ghost of a fog, and a ghostly chill, and a ghost of an east wind that would have given out a ghostly wail in ghostly places.

My friend Timid is very thin. I think I have seen his arms in a high wind blown out straight before him like a couple of pennants. But they might have been stirred by intellectual emotion. For he is very sensitive, as well as very thin. I startled my friend dreadfully by intercepting him upon the bridge with a loud "whither away?" But the shock jolted out of him the word "Brompton." "Boilers?" I asked. "No," he said, "I am going to the Consumption Hospital." Of course it was my part, as a friend, to tell him that he looked like a case for it; but he told me he was upon no jesting

errand. For the Brompton Hospital was going to send twenty-four consumptive patients, of whom there was yet hope, to winter in Madeira; and he was going down the river with them to see them off. I asked him to come in and dine with me when he returned, and tell me all about it. He said he would, and he did. And this is his report, delivered as we sat over a snug fire, with fog shut out, and curtains drawn, and glasses filled.

"You know what a wretched day it was."

"And is."

"Ah, yes. It would make one shiver to look at it as it lies dead in the streets in its damp shroud; it must be a wretched night upon the river, and that steamer with its little cargo of consumptives hasn't started yet; won't start until two in the morning; and may not be ready then."

"Why were they not sent out in October, before this raw season set in?"

"Well, I asked that question too, but found, as usual, that many a thing seeming wrong is right, Parnell's Hermit, to wit. There are not many passenger steamers to Madeira. The P. and O. boats, as they touch at Malta, because of the cholera there would be put in quarantine if they went to Madeira now. So they don't go. There's only a short season of other passenger traffic for the benefit of invalids, and the last boat that went would have reached Madeira before the end of the hot season. If patients had been sent by that, they would have run a new risk from vicissitude of climate. And so, no steamer would do but this, and she was to sail this evening. They will get to Madeira in about eleven days."

"Well, Timid, now tell us all about it."

"Do you want to know the history of the hospital, and how it is built in the form of the letter H.—H was a Hospital, and so on? Because I've got all these sort of facts in my pocket."

"A very good place for them. I wouldn't have them disturbed on any account. But what did you see?"

"Oh, a very nice place. I had some lunch at the Brompton Boilers."

"Had you really? That's important. Well."

"Well, the travellers were to dine at half-past twelve, and I didn't arrive at the hospital in the shape of a H till twenty-five minutes to one."

"Well?"

"Well; through being late, I regret that I shall be unable to state to the distinguished journal for which you know I report, what meat they had. When I saw them they were eating pudding. Plum-pudding and, I inferred, roast beef, and shall roundly assert roast beef when I write my report, with all the statistics out of my pocket, and the graphic details. You know how we do it. 'On Tuesday last the polite and usually quiet neighbourhood of Brompton was——' you start as for a Fire or Murder; parade your figures out of the report, put in your facts pictorially, and end by patting somebody upon the head. Uncertainty won't do in public writing. If you believe its beef you must assert beef roundly. But I won't mention beef to you, either roast or round, because you are a confidential friend. The travellers whom I saw eating pudding were all men: in my paper, I should say 'of the male sex;' to you I say only that they were men. Then I was taken to the board-room to see the committee, also, to the best of my belief, all men, eating soup. Through leaving them too soon it happens that I do not know what meat the committee ate, for when I came back into the board-room they also were eating pudding."

"All those details are very important, Timid; pray make much of them. Pudding. And you had none?"

"You see I had lunched at Brompton Boilers, and there was a chair beside the chairman—evidently a most excellent man the chairman, I have got his name in my pocket—and on the other side of the empty chair was a stout literary gentleman. He was eating soup when I first saw him, and he was eating pudding—well, it might be pie—when I saw him next. You know I am constitutionally nervous, and I was a little flustered on the subject of that vacant chair, in awe of the stout literary gentleman, who might have eaten me. Besides, I had my umbrella in my hand, and you may not eat your soup with an umbrella. The first doubt on my mind was, Whose chair is this? You remember, of course, that the vacant seat at King Arthur's Round Table was called Seat Perilous, and that courteous knight the secretary, whose time I was taking up, might be the very Sir Galahad for whom this empty chair was destined. If I sat in it, and took his soup, should I go down, as the wrongful occupant of the Seat Perilous was to go down, into the bowels of the earth, while the first mouthful of the soup that was another's was yet going down into my stomach? It would have cost me a tough reading of Hegel to get to the bottom of all that nice reasoning; so as I was sure they had not Hegel on the premises to lend me, I said I would have no soup. Besides, I am a journalist."

"And, as such, have forsworn soup?"

"No. But a practice has sprung up lately, and is becoming a great deal too common, of stroking the stomachs of newspaper reporters. A hotel opens: will the press come and be fed, and qualify itself for a report upon its cellar? A great exhibition opens: will the press come to a supper and become acquainted with its merits? To all which invitations, so far as I can represent the press, I flatly reply—No, I won't; and I do wish, most heartily, that each of my brother-reporters would say with me: 'I will not be fed by any man who knows and can care nothing about me personally, and can see in me only a machine to grease. I will faithfully and simply do my work, and eat the fruit of my own labour, convivial only with my own friends.' That repast in the board-room was a little too much for a lunch, and a good deal too early for a

dinner. I took it to be grease for the two or three literary machines, my brethren, whom I saw sitting thereat. The plea of preparation for the river air might possibly be valid in its favour; but then why carry sandwiches and wine on board the steamer? 'We will have some wine put on board to keep out the cold,' said the excellent chairman, with a smile at the stout literary gentleman, whose name, I believe, he did not know. And so, on board the steamer there was wine in one of the cabins for the further greasing of the hinges of the press. I would as soon have taken poison, and might as well, for it was port."

"Well, you know, there was nothing meant but good-natured hospitality."

"No doubt; and I am naturally bashful among strangers. But it was a grief to me that Mr. Galahad, the secretary, did not take the Seat Perilous and eat. He took me round the hospital in the form of a H, while all the world in it was feeding. What they were having in the wards was Irish stew. It was stew day. Good stew too, with honest-looking chops in it, and baked rice-puddings to follow. Well, and there were the women's quarters, and there were the men's quarters; and in the pure temperate air in the galleries there sat, here women, there men, about long tables, in quiet dinner parties, not more languid and pale than some of your fashionable companies towards the fag-end of the season. The consumptive eye has its own lustre, and perhaps it was brightened in some faces by interest in the day's event; for an event it was, that touched many a heart among them. I don't usually care much for special hospitals, believing that many of them collect cases which had better be sent to a good general hospital, and that general hospitals are of infinitely more service to humanity by the advance in knowledge of the healing art. But while small-pox and fever are among the obvious exceptions, I think that consumption, though less obviously, is an exception too.

"A Consumption Hospital can only be of service to the very poor. It is peculiarly a disease for home treatment where a fair degree of home comfort can be attained. But where poverty presses so sorely that a healthy home is unattainable, then I think it is well to gather these poor patients into a comfortable hospital of their own, where they are nursed with utmost skill, well fed, in a pure temperate air free from draughts, and comforted with special hope and sympathy. For nobody doubts now that in the first, at least, of its three stages consumption can be cured. Patients sent in good time do go from this hospital with a new lease of life, and after they have left may keep themselves easily within range of watchful care. They are admitted upon recommendation of a governor, that is to say, yearly subscriber of three guineas. Each governor may send one patient a year, and the patient is kept thirteen weeks, at a cost to the hospital of about ten pounds. So of course the money of the large number of governors who don't send patients helps to support the charity of those who do. There is a famously appointed kitchen, and there as a dispensary with a row of brass taps for the serving out of the different qualities of cod-liver oil, as the publican serves out his mild, bitter, and fourpenny. I wouldn't like to say that I remember how many hundred, thousand, million, or billion gallons of cod-liver oil are used in that place every year."

"Have you the figures in your pocket?"

"Yes, of course. Let me see. Eight hundred and fifty-eight gallons, and three-quarters. Also two hundred and twenty-two gallons of brandy, twenty gallons of gin, six gallons of rum, one hundred and forty-two gallons of sherry, and three hundred and ninety-three gallons of port. These are properly put in the drug account; and all the pure wine used upon these premises in a twelvemonth was one dozen of claret."

"Pocket the rest of the figures."

"Willingly. But I should like the hospital committee to make the discovery that they can get Greek wine nearly as strong as port, and a great deal wholesomer and cheaper, and that if it be the spirit they want, whisky-and-water beats port hollow. Pardon me for being a little sensitive upon the subject of that fraudulent old humbug of a wine. Coarse spirit at eightpence a bottle is exported from England, brandied, logwooded, mixed with a little wine, mellowed by age, and imported again into this country as a luxury, partly owing its cost to the long warehousing necessary to enable the mixture to abate of its first nauseousness, and become drinkable."

"Enough of that."

"The mention of it *is* enough. It came of mentioning the cod liver oil and drugs of the dispensary. There is a chapel, too, at that hospital in the shape of a H—a very handsome one, entirely the gift of Sir Henry Foulis. But to come to the travellers.

"One of the hospital physicians, Dr. W. H. Stone, was lately paying a visit to Madeira, and studying the climate, when it was proposed to him by some generous residents in the island to establish winter-quarters there—a sanatorium—for some of the poor patients at Brompton to whom there was hope that one such escape from the English winter might secure recovery. A committee was formed by the kind-hearted Madeira people, under the presidency of Captain Erskine, her Majesty's consul, and it was definitively settled that if the hospital authorities would select with great care twenty of the poor patients to whom a winter in Madeira would be of most service, send them out in November, and take them home in May, the friendly islanders would lodge and feed, care for and comfort them, during the whole of their stay. A large merchant's house was accordingly taken at Madeira, in a suitable position, and adapted to their use. The patients whose cure might possibly be completed by such aid were carefully picked, each being examined successively by three physicians;

and only men are sent this year, because the experiment would be too much complicated by a mixture of the sexes. Next year it should be the women's turn to go. It is the first time that, in case of consumption, one of the most inestimable advantages of wealth has been extended to the poor. If the success expected be attained, there will be help wanted at home to secure the permanence and the extension of so beneficent a scheme. The interest felt by the patients throughout the hospital in the start of this little detachment of their comrades was very manifest. Surely all hearts were warmer for the sense of sympathy that stretched its helping hand to them from far away over the sea. The attendants and nurses seemed to be in a pleased flutter of kindly excitement. There was the heap of wrappers and of boxes in the hall; a box of ice for the voyage, a book-box for winter readings, and there were boxes uniform in size and colour containing the kit of each of the twenty patients, labelled not with names, but with all the letters of the alphabet excepting U, V, W, X, Y, Z.

"About the boxes there were the twenty travellers to whom the chaplain had spoken his wise and generous farewells before they rose from their last dinner in England. Now they were breaking out with little cordial farewells and hand-graspings with fellow-patients and with friendly nurses. The captain of their band, one of themselves, was a lame man, who had been a seafarer. He told me that he had been in the hospital ten years ago for consumption, and gone away well. But now his lungs were touched again, wherefore he was come back, and expected that Madeira would make a sound man of him once more. He had the friendship of his comrades, but indeed it was noticeable how the common danger and common hope seemed to have drawn them all into quiet but strong friendship with one another. Omnibuses came—two of them—gratuitously placed at the service of these fugitives before the march of Winter by the General Omnibus Company. The omnibuses were only to take them with their baggage to the Chelsea pier, where a steamer of the London and Westminster Company's was waiting for them; also placed gratuitously at their service. Had the weather been too rough for the boat passage down the river, the two omnibuses had been offered to carry the whole party with their friends to the Hermitage pier below London Bridge, off which lay the Portuguese vessel that was to land them at Madeira. Up went the boxes. A, B, C, D, E, F, G,—the best part of the British alphabet was making its escape from us. Then, with more farewells, the travellers were packed, and then the omnibus wheels grated on the gravel, and at the windows stood the comrades in sickness whom they left behind, waving God speed to the poor fugitives. And at the hospital doors, and on the steps, stood patients, doctors, porters, nurses, and white-aproned maids, and from all these cheers were given, in which the kindly notes of women's voices were most heard, while all the windows were astir with waving handkerchiefs. I was a stranger, yet, as I looked back on the scene from outside the gates, it brought some of the prevailing damp into my eyes. Under the chill and dull November skies it seemed for a moment that one saw unclouded heaven through the hearts of men.

"Well, then, I walked to the pier and joined the sick wayfarers on the steamer, where they were packed comfortably round the walls of a warm cabin with a very bright fire in the middle of it, and sat, one with a sister, one with a brother, one with a wife, huddled close. The chaplain and chairman spoke to them a few more words of simple sympathy in wishing them good speed, and shook hands with them all. So we went down the river till, beyond the bridge, we came alongside the Lisbon steamer, in which the whole fore-cabin had been taken for their exclusive use.

"The steamer was coaling dirtily and taking in a cargo of oil, which suggested the question whether we export train-oil to the south of Europe, and get it back in salad oil, as we export corn spirit and get it returned in port wine. We lost ourselves then among the coal-dirt, saw the alphabet safely stowed, admired the handsome state-cabin, thought the fore-cabin accommodations disproportionately narrow; and, as we returned to the river steamer, saw groups of our poor consumptive friends gathering to look down upon us from the rails of the quarter-deck. And there also already one or two young English ladies were having their shawls adjusted, or caressing the pet dog that was to fly with them from the perils of which the gathering winter mist upon the river was as the great visible shadow. Through the mist at last we parted from our poor friends, taking among us the brothers and the sisters and wives furtively rubbing their eyes with the corners of their shawls, and with exchange of little cheerings. May those fugitives find Madeira skies as genial as the sympathies that opened for them the way to such a wintering! And may they bring back next May a bill of health that shall establish the success of this experiment, and cause it, with English help, to be repeated every winter to the end of time!"

To all which, being of one mind with my friend Timid, I said Amen! As who would not?

THE ROUGHS' GUIDE.

My sporting information is derived from sources altogether distinct from that Guide to the Turf which is issued periodically by the ingenious Mr. Ruff. It is served up to me every Wednesday and Saturday, at the moderate charge of One Penny, and I am advised, admonished, warned, and instructed, with a vigour, prescience, and versatility perfectly astonishing to myself. Carping critics say that my guide is the favourite organ of the Roughs, and that it is to be found in the parlours of pugilism, and in houses where out-door betting-men and fraudulent "welshers" chiefly congregate. The same objection would apply to the air we breathe and the bread we eat. As a humble disciple of an able teacher,

I fearlessly claim for my Penny sporting guide, a range of information and a profundity of knowledge which it would be difficult to surpass. What is it to me if the Rough share my partiality for vigorous Saxon, or be delighted as I am with words and phrases it requires natural aptitude and a special education to understand? Find me a newspaper in which races, fights, hunts, coursing-meetings, advertisements, answers to, and letters from, correspondents, are more thoroughly in accordance with what we have ever been taught to consider good sporting taste, and I will admit that what is sauce for the rough is not sauce for the clean-shirted turfite; but, till then, pardon me if I hold to my original views, and maintain the excellence of my organ as an astute Mentor and a just judge.

Opening one of its recent numbers, and turning to its advertisement-sheet, I gain, as usual, much valuable information. The weak-minded and credulous people who believe the form of gambling known as "sweepstakes" to be suppressed by act of parliament, would do well to read with me the seductive offers of Messrs. Bilson and Nixon, of Mr. Tenstun, or Mr. Chancer. The first gentlemen advertise a "sweep of three thousand members at one shilling each, to be drawn every Monday throughout the year;" and you or I, or any one blessed with a shilling, or the means of making or taking one, have but to send it to these philanthropists to obtain a vested interest in the following splendid contingencies: "First horse, twenty-five pounds; second horse, twelve pounds; third horse, seven pounds; twenty pounds amongst starters; twenty pounds amongst non-starters; fifty prizes of ten shillings; one hundred prizes of five shillings." This applies to a forthcoming handicap; but Messrs. Bilson and Co. are kind enough to make provision for their customers every Monday, so that there need be no waiting for "events" before the fate of your shilling or mine is known. The process of investing is simplicity itself. Direct your letter (enclosing a shilling and two stamped envelopes) to Charles Bilson (address given), and the thing is done. Or, if you prefer it, visit one of the agents of this enterprising firm, "stationed in all the principal towns," and personally procure your ticket for the great sweep. Frank Tenstun offers like facilities, but not stooping to name the number of subscribers to which he thinks it wise to limit his kindness, he simply announces the vast sums to be given away in prizes, and the small sum required for one of his tickets. Mr. Chancer flies at rather higher game, for his chances range in price from one shilling to five, and though his prizes are less splendid in amount, he benevolently allows you to increase the probability of obtaining them by purchasing "seven tickets for the price of six."

If I wish to make my fortune in a different way, and to decline the unscientific and unskilled gambling of the lottery in favour of betting on horses entered in forthcoming races, my paper is ready for me. Blight and Lovenote are, I read, "to be seen at the back of the Muse's Brewery, daily,"* and will execute my commissions, if not less than one pound, to any amount. So will Mr. Gather, of Great Bustle-street, or Mr. Blebb, of nowhere in particular, or Mr. Bolton, of whom I regret to read in another part of my paper that, although advertising "from Bloater's, Wiltshire-street," "the worthy landlord of that hostelry has no connexion with him, neither will he be answerable for any transactions he may make under any circumstances." If before investing money you would like to secure trustworthy information, you may, for two guineas annually, secure Judas's Turf Circular and Betting Recorder, to be delivered to you on every Saturday and Sunday mornings throughout the year, with intelligence of so mystic a character, that it can only be read by aid of private telegraphic keys. Of other people anxious to minister to your wants, my paper is full. Biographies of the late Mr. Sayers: white bull bitches, fillies, colts, stallions, greyhounds, billiard-tables, cricket-bats, skittle-pins, liniments for the spavin, embrocations for sprains, liquid blisters for general lameness, breech-loaders, boxing-gloves, and summer drinks, are all to be had in unexceptionable excellence, from advertisers in my sporting guide. "Pop in your left," is the pleasant heading of one of these advertisements, and "Bravery, skill, manliness, courage, forbearance, and unflinching prowess of true Britons," the key-note of another. The first relates to the sale of boxing-gloves, the second to departed professors of the noble art for the encouragement of which boxing-gloves were invented. Nor is my tutor behindhand in the friendly warnings it gives its pupils. Side by side with the engaging offers of gentlemen who are to be "heard of" daily from eleven to two, behind a brewery, or at the bar of a tavern, are the answers to correspondents. Many of these are of a highly significant character. "Lynx" is tersely informed "they are nothing but welshers;" "A Victim, Hackney," learns, "you, too, have been welshed. The card you sent us is not worth keeping;" "H. E. B." elicits, "as soon as we are satisfied they are dishonest we refuse their advertisements," which prompts the speculation as to how much satisfaction my paper requires. "Corkonian" is warned, "never put faith in any such things;" "A Backer,' that "we cannot recommend" some list-keeper unnamed; "Rustic," that something "is all nonsense," with the pertinent rider, "if not, how is it he cannot make his own fortune first?" "W. H. T., of Bath," reads, "the simple answer is that you have been done;" "Henry Mooney" is congratulated "on saving his money, for Cowes, alias Abel, is an old offender, and we have continually warned the public against him;" and poor Mooney learns further, for his consolation, that Cowes, alias Abel, "has resorted to the same ruffianly proceedings before, whenever he has been disappointed of his prey." Mr. Gather, on the other hand, is vouched for, as trustworthy to any amount, and as the above extracts repre-

* See AGAINST THE GRAIN, No. 345, page 442.

sent about half of the answers to turf correspondents, they form a healthy commentary upon the advertisements, and a corroborative testimony to the character of the financial agents we recently saw pursuing their vocation "Against the Grain."

Gleaning information in regular and methodical order, I next carefully digest a leading article devoted to the comparative success of well-known jockeys during the past year. Minute statistics as to the number of races—they are spoken of as "contests," and the tone of the writer is that of a field-officer awarding praise, encouragement, and admonition to his generals after a series of engagements which have affected the destinies of the world—are given, and logical deductions drawn. The great Landem is as usual at the top of the poll. Recognised and appreciated in his profession for consummate skill and undeviating honesty, the continuance of Landem's proud pre-eminence is, I read, an article of faith with the entire sporting community. Lord Palmerston's return for Tiverton, and Sir Robert Peel's for Tamworth, are, on the principle of arguing from small things to great, alluded to as illustrating the firmness of Landem's tenure. Out of the four hundred and fourteen races run in the last twelvemonth by this jockey without guile, he won one hundred and forty-two, was second in eighty-six, and third in forty-five, which fully justifies my paper in crediting him with "a splendid average." James Grinsure comes next in rank, the figures being given with the same reverential exactitude as in the case of Landem. So with many other jockeys, their professional doings of the year are recorded, and commented on with the care and ability their position and importance demand. After congratulations have been bestowed with discrimination, the men being named in order, and priority given to success, we have commiseration upon the once great Baldloft, and the formerly eminent Galloner. It is greatly to be regretted that the brilliant Galloner should have been "tied down to such an unfortunate cap and jacket as the 'primrose,'" for Mr. Railer's stable is, as every one knows, "so out of form as to be barely able to secure a plate." As for poor Baldloft, he is spoken of as "out of the hunt," and we mourn over his sad decline, partly owing, we hint, to unjust suspicions, and the inglorious running of an Epsom favourite. Bells, another great man, whose past reputation is his most formidable rival, has struggled nobly against the adverse circumstances of "increasing weight" in himself, and "indifferent form" in his employer's stable; and we learn with satisfaction, which is none the less fervent for its being founded on a blind faith in our instructor, that "the list of winning jockeys provides interesting and suggestive matter for contemplation"—a conclusion which few readers will be disposed to deny.

That the gentleman-rider question is settled at last, will be a source of congratulation to every well-regulated mind. We learn all about it at page two. Divers people have ridden races as amateurs, when it has been well known that they acted professionally, and grave scandals have arisen in consequence. This may be inferred from a letter taking exception to a previous leading article, in which the writer's character as a gentleman-rider was seriously impugned, and wherein a missing snaffle-bridle, "short weight at the scale," and, "it is not true," play leading but confusing parts. That the gentleman in question threatens legal proceedings, and that the editor, in a pithy note, hopes, sardonically, that the explanations vouchsafed will be satisfactory to the public, furnish some slight clue to the matter at issue, and make us see that the rule that for the future all gentlemen-riders shall be members of one of a list of clubs, or be proposed and seconded by members of the same, is judicious and advisable. In another case we learn that the objection to Mr. Plant as to his not being a gentleman, has been withdrawn, and his right to ride Brown Shoes in that character fully admitted.

Passing now to the Autumn Notes and the Close of the Season, "it is satisfactory to know"—I don't in the least understand why, but I accept the statement with unabated confidence—"that there will henceforth be some cessation of the plating that has been rampant during a great part of the season, and which invariably flourishes like a deadly upas-tree under the auspices of" a gentleman named. That the year 1865 "has been essentially one of 'scratchings,' 'ropings,' and 'milkings,'" is clearly a matter for national regret, and we turn with a sigh of relief to another portion of the Notes. That Sir Tiger is "a little deficient in his truth of symmetry," especially "in the sinking of his back," is told with the tender delicacy the subject demands; while the profound truth, "there never was a horse without some fault," and the prophecy, "it will take a clinker to beat him at Epsom," are both calculated to assuage his owner's grief at Sir Tiger's deficiency.

Two columns and a half of small print give me the concluding history of Shrewsbury November meeting; and after reading how "the talent thought the weights admirably adjusted," and "stood Birchrod a cast off;" how the followers of Mrs. Bray got "a facer;" how Mr. Bray became a hot favourite; and how the bookmakers had in one race all the best of it—I note the weights for Croydon Steeple-chase, and make my mouth water covetously, by reading that a mathematician will forward for thirteen stamps scientific rules for "winning, hedging, and getting on." Hunting comprises a long list of coming meets, and full particulars of a recent one, whereat the Heir to the Crown was present "on his splendid chesnut," and actually spoke, as you or I would, without being rude—the report says "chatted affably"—and where the first fox was killed in the open without affording a run, but where a second one "ran a ring, making twice for its old haunt, where it was killed," the royal party, including the Princess, being "all up to witness the usual form gone through on such occasions"—hunting, as you see, meets with ample mention from my

guide. But the great event of the week has been the funeral of the late Mr. Sayers, and this is recorded with a degree of particularity and a depth of feeling which proves how easily a popular demonstration may be misunderstood and misrepresented by the uninitiated or the prejudiced. Not that the mourning writer gives way to any of those funereal heroics which provoked the ire of some critics upon a recent occasion. This "mute of journalism" is studiously unaffected in his style, and it is easy to see that, from one point of view, the obsequies of the late champion were, to use the language of after-dinner orators, "all that could be desired." "That a man so distinguished in his profession"—mark the delicacy here; no vulgar allusions to the departed's proficiency in administering, say, his celebrated blow "the auctioneer," but a phrase which might be applied with propriety to a benevolent physician or an accomplished artist. That a man so distinguished in his profession should arouse a great amount of interest, was only natural; but yet four miles of road thronged with people, exceeded every one's most sanguine hopes. Candidly admitting (and the sound common sense of the admission increases my respect for my teacher) that pugilism has fallen from its high estate, we are next told that it was as the last representative exponent of the noble art, and because, from Mr. Sayers's funeral, that "the decline and fall"—pray note the language—"of the P. R." would be dated by future Gibbons, that "reflective persons assembled to say peace to his ashes, and whisper a farewell to the glories of the ring."

In my capacity of "reflective person," *I* attended the funeral in question, and am now pleased to find myself credited with far-seeing philosophy. It is true that my conclusions differed slightly from the gentleman whose account I am reading now, but as from internal evidence I conclude that he had the privilege of assembling with the family and their friends, and of riding to the cemetery, while I humbly trudged thither on foot, I feel sure that the slight discrepancy between us may be explained by the distinction in our points of view. The "very pardonable desire on the part of the crowd to see the last of their hero;" "the little pressure brought to bear from the outside;" and "the marked decorum of the many hundreds who gained admission," prove that my Mentor was in the chapel while faces and heads were being danced upon by thick-booted Roughs outside. The "little pressure" consisted in a hand-to-hand fight between two score or so of policemen and several hundreds of the worst-looking blackguards that even London is capable of producing; and "the marked decorum" consisted of callous shrieking, blasphemy, of struggles for place round the grave-head, and of the reckless destruction of trees and memorials near it. Much of this was fortunately unknown to the mourning party, for the riot was at its fiercest while they were in the cemetery chapel, and I only name these touching incidents here, to prove that, as "every horse has some fault," so microscopic scrutiny may detect trivial errors of judgment even in the most exemplary of guides. That we should have an acrostic on the late champion's name signed "A Hard-working Man," and that "One of Tom's Admirers" should proffer "his mite" towards a statue to that hero, seem things of course; and we turn to aquatics with a profound feeling that we have yet in England poets and capitalists ready for their duty.

Plenty of variety again in the aquatic department. Scullers' race for sixty pounds between two athletes, with succinct biography of each, and full particulars of their latest performances. Where Pastor took his breathings, and the watchful eye of the experienced host to whom his splendid condition was due, and how he lost the race because the referee called something a foul, must be read to be appreciated. So must the Torpid and other trials at Oxford, where glorious spurts made up an exciting race. If you are doggishly inclined, let us turn the page. Here you read at length of coursing matches, where the deeds of dogs are so glowingly recorded as to make you doubt whether you were right in giving man the second place in the animal creation, or whether a practised greyhound should not rank next the horse. Stakes for dog puppies, with eighty-seven entries; stakes for bitch puppies, with eighty-five entries; stakes for beaten dog puppies; stakes for beaten bitch puppies; open stakes; stakes for all-aged greyhounds; and stakes for dogs of residents—all these are here. Do you fish or shoot?—Here is a letter from a gentleman signing himself Champion Angler, who seems rather indignant that some other gentleman won't fish him for one hundred pounds a-side; and here are records of some brave sport with guns and pigeons, where five-pound notes, fat bullocks, and silver watches, depended on the issue. The fascinating art of swimming, the convivial suppers it gives rise to, and the money proficiency in it may win; billiard matches, in which leading West-end bookmakers take part; athletic sports, running, walking, and jumping, and the silver goblets and claret cups to be won, gradually lead us, like timeworn bachelors, to the ring. That, at a fight last week, shots with the left were interchanged, bursters on the head given; and that while one man got well home on the chest, another retorted with a cross-buttocker; and that the victor, who was as strong and fresh as at the commencement, held his opponent on the ropes, "somewhat after the manner of Farnborough" (query, tried to choke him?), and on being told to relinquish his grasp, adroitly answered, "He meant to keep his man there while he had got him," all testify to the keen interest taken in the profession of which the late Mr. Sayers was a distinguished ornament.

Such is my guide to the turf. It appeals alike to roughs and gentles, and is surely a marvellous illustration of the tastes, habits, and amusements of a large section of the people. We sneer at the nations who encourage gambling in their capitals, and brag of having put down lotteries; while shilling sweepstakes are openly advertised.

We profess to have abolished public-house betting; and list-keepers, some fraudulent, some honest, spread their nets for shop-lad, workman, and clerk, with complete impunity. We are excruciatingly severe on the gipsy who tells the fortunes of silly servant-girls; and we allow a race of professional "tipsters" to batten on the money they receive for pretending to peer into the future. We are justly harsh in our treatment of the swindlers who victimise that artless innocent the British tradesman; and we leave Rustic and his brother correspondents to the tender mercies of Abel and the "welshers." These are some of the anomalies my paper brings to light, while faithfully holding up the mirror to the classes to whom it appeals. Not many years ago, its comparative freedom from slang and coarseness would have unfitted it for the sporting world. If it really be, as the hypercritical assert, The Roughs' Guide, then has the rough of to-day, in spite of occasional grandiloquence, better reading and a more reputable instructor than would have been tolerated or understood by the aristocratic bloods who wrenched off knockers and maltreated watchmen a generation back.

A DISH OF POULTRY.

As I had a wish to be fashionable, I decided to set up a poultry-yard.

There is one disadvantage in being married: if single, you can say you will do a thing, and do it; if married, you may assert what you please, but you will find that you cannot do it, without reservation.

In this particular instance of keeping poultry, my husband, who is a practical man, made a reservation. "I have no objection, provided you make it pay, and promise me a fresh egg every morning of the year." I set to work to find out how to make it pay, and I came to the conclusion that, to do so, I must be poultry-woman myself.

It was a little irksome at first to get up at six o'clock in the morning; but I comforted myself by remembering, that in the pursuit of fashion people did many more disagreeable things than that. Indeed, I soon began to like it; and if I chose to try and describe the beauty of a dewy morning, I am pretty sure I should not know where to end, for every morning there was something fresh to admire.

Making my poultry pay, involved another regulation. I could not pretend to make my name famous by some wonderful breed of new fowls, and provide my husband with a fresh egg every morning of his life. I must have breeds of all sorts and kinds to do that. So I found myself, at the end of a year, surrounded by plenty of poultry, of every sort, size, and description. Moreover, they interested me extremely. I used to take a chair, sit down among them, and study their characters.

Setting aside their little peculiarities as birds, how wonderfully they reminded me of the society in which we lived! Each hen had her little peculiarities, just as each of my female friends had their whimsies. The feathered cocks were not more absurd than many a gentleman of my acquaintance; and so many likenesses did I find in my cackling and crowing company to my visiting and bowing acquaintances, that I christened my cocks and hens after their human prototypes. I could write pages on the dispositions and idiosyncrasies of fowls; but I intend to confine myself to two.

Among my various sorts and kinds, I had one little golden-laced Hamburg hen, of so elegant a form, so beautifully complexioned, and of such sweet, engaging manners, that I called her Lady Mary, after a certain lovely and beloved young friend.

Lady Mary made herself the favourite, whether I would or not. She was always the first to see me coming; she did not fuss herself, or gobble eagerly after food, but flew on to a rail; as I passed that rail, she flew into my hand. From it she daintily helped herself out of the tin of food. During the whole process of feeding, she remained on my hand or shoulder, looking down on the greedy crowd below with lofty disdain.

Had she any grievance to communicate to me, she flew upon my hat, and made onslaughts on it. I thus understood the water was not fit for her to drink, or that some one had been daring to use her nest, or that she had serious thoughts of laying an egg. She was immensely fussy about her nest, going in and out of it, peering at me, as if I was perfectly aware of all her wants. In her nest I had put a little gallene egg, by way of a nest-egg, thinking the size of it would be about the size of her own egg. Not a bit of it. In her various trials of all the nests about, she had come upon one with an addled turkey-egg in it, by way of nest-egg. I understood as well as possible, that though Lady Mary's nest was made of chopped straw, unlike all the others, and though I had put a grating so that few but herself could get into it, she never would be satisfied, or lay an egg comfortably, until she had the addled turkey-egg substituted for the gallene's egg. Readers, have you not often met a friend similarly whimsical, with everything in the world but one little trifle, the possession of a neighbour? Lady Mary was immensely delighted when she had the turkey's egg given her. In hen language, she chuckled over it for hours, and diligently laid a little tiny egg by it, almost every other day.

My other "historical" fowl was also a hen. A heavy short-legged stupid-looking creature, with a little Polish blood in her veins; for she had a shabby-looking topknot of feathers on her head, that never would arrange itself straight. Like an old dowager, who thinks the family diamonds will make amends for the dyed satin gown, this old hen fancied her topknot was a patent of nobility, and she strutted about as if queen of the yard. She reminded me very much of an old great-aunt of mine, whose head-gear was the one worry of her own life, and the life of those near her. She thought of what she should put

on her head the moment she got up in the morning; and the wonder, if it had kept straight all day (which it never did), occupied her the last thing at night. I had a mind to call my old hen, Aunt Deb, but the likeness was too striking, so I christened her Juno. She was a stupid creature, and plumped her first egg down in the yard; but I must do her the justice to say, that when once shown a nest, she pertinaciously kept to it ever after, no matter what state it might be in. Between Lady Mary and Juno there was no love lost; the former always "shied" her, as it were, just as if some old fat farmer's wife was being too familiar with a young princess. Not that there was much feeling of any kind in poor old Juno's breast. She appeared to me, solely occupied in the thought of her topknot. She seemed always trying to gaze up at this wonderful structure, so that she was always the last to get any food, to be on her perch, to do anything.

She laid eggs with praiseworthy industry, and she sat upon them like a model mother. In fact, it appeared to me that she was always sitting.

Though I was the poultry-woman, I was allowed a person not only to clean out the fowl-houses every other day, but also to take care of them during any absence of mine. Judith Morgan was the name of my coadjutor.

"Judith," said I, "I am going from home for three weeks. Now, mind you take care of the fowls."

"'Deed and I will, mem."

"Save all the eggs, and put them in bran. Any hens wanting to sit, set them, and make a note of the day. Don't forget to set duck eggs as well."

"'Deed and I won't, mem."

"And mind you call cheerily out to them, and speak to them all, especially Lady Mary."

"'Deed and I will, mem."

When I returned home after three weeks' absence (I usually indulged myself by not getting up the first morning or so), I went down after breakfast to inspect my poultry, and hear of their welfare. I was not surprised that no Lady Mary met me. Three weeks of disappointment in a hennish mind would naturally tend to forgetfulness.

"Well, Judith, how many eggs?"

"Three undered and highty-two, mem."

"Any hens sitting?"

"'Deed, mem, there's old Juno at it agin, and deed o' goodness, mem, if Lady Mary bean't a sitting too."

"Is she indeed? That is the first time I ever knew her do so."

"True for you, mem. It were all along a missing you. She took to sitting immediate."

"Then her time is nearly up?"

"'Deed, mem, as she wore that fond o' big eggs, I did give her duck-eggs."

"Then you were very silly. And I suppose Juno has hen-eggs?"

"'Deed hev she, mem."

"Well, couldn't you see that a little thing like Lady Mary could only cover a few eggs, and ought to have had small ones; while old Juno can keep warm almost as many as a turkey, and could have taken fifteen duck-eggs? Besides, Lady Mary never sat before, and a month of it will sicken her."

"'Deed, mem, it's amazin'; I didn't see that."

I spoke to Lady Mary, who condescended to come out and inform me, after her fashion, that she thought it high time she should bring up a family. But evidently she was heartily sick of sitting, and I was obliged to keep the grating over her nest until the eggs chipped.

Madame Juno was sitting awkwardly on her eggs, gazing up at her topknot, evidently equally indifferent to my attentions or Judith's; either was the same to her.

In due time, both hatched out, and were put out in the orchard under two coops not far from each other, with wired grass runs for the young ones. Lady Mary was intensely delighted with her downy little lumps of fluff at first. But when nature asserted her rights, and they began to paddle about, into the water and out, over the food and in it, sprinkling it about, and eating it in an extraordinary fashion, I shall never forget her dismay.

Had not the mother instinct been irrepressible, I doubt if she would have permitted the little damp dirty things to go and dry themselves warm under her. As it was, all her mother pride was gone. She would not eat, she would not cluck, she seemed almost broken-hearted; and, as if to put the climax to her woes, she had a full view of Madam Juno clucking sonorously to eleven of the prettiest, brightest, sweetest little dainty chickens ever seen—which, by-the-by, in her perpetual gazing up at her beloved topknot, she was always treading upon.

"Oh, Judith," said I, "how sorry I am that Lady Mary has not those pretty chickens, and Juno the ducks! Ducks can always take care of themselves, and old Juno is so stupid, she will tread those chickens to death."

"'Deed, mem, 'tis a pity. Lady Mary don't seem to stomach the ducklings at all."

"She will never sit again, you will see," said I. I coaxed her, and petted her, and did all I could to soothe her feelings, even going so far as to let her out the next day for a little run. She did not go far, but kept close to Juno's coop. Juno was let out in a day or two after, fortunately by myself, so that I witnessed what followed. The moment old Juno stalked forth, blundering over her brood as she did it, Lady Mary flew upon her. She buffeted her, and, as if aware of her weakness, pecked at her topknot; she hustled her, drove her, and at last sent her flying, half blind, and wholly stupid, into her (Lady Mary's) coop, whither the little ducks had fled, in dire terror at their foster-mother's behaviour. She watched for a few moments. I gently closed the coop, making Juno and the ducks prisoners, when, on hearing the little plaintive chirp of the startled chickens, Lady Mary gave a loud and joyous chirrup, to which they quickly responded, and collecting them all round her, clucking and chirruping

until she almost lost her balance, little Lady Mary carried the whole brood to the other end of the orchard. Then, it was impossible to say which was the happier, the proud little mother, or the eager busy chirping little chicks.

As for Madam Juno, she remained stunned and mystified for some time. At last, feeling little timid soft things creeping under her, she obeyed her instincts, and squatted over them. Then she and her newly-acquired children all had a good doze; and to this minute it is mine and it is Judith's belief that she does not know her children were ever changed.

HALF A MILLION OF MONEY.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "BARBARA'S HISTORY."

CHAPTER XC. AT FAULT.

Up and down, up and down, till his eyes wearied of the shipping and his feet of the pavé, Saxon wandered along the quays of the grand old city of Bordeaux, seeking vainly for any definite news of the Daughter of Ocean. He had lost much precious time by the way—a night in Bristol, a day in London, another night in Bordeaux; but for this there had been absolutely no help. The early train that took him from Bristol to London arrived too late for the morning mail to Paris, and the express from Paris to Bordeaux brought him into the antique capital of Guienne between ten and eleven at night. Armed, however, with the same strong will that had carried him along thus far, Saxon set to work to pursue his search as vigorously in Bordeaux as in London and Bristol, and, if possible, to make up for lost time by even greater perseverance and patience.

Up to this point he had held no further communication with Greatorex. He was determined to act for himself and by himself, without help or counsel. He would, perhaps, have found it difficult to explain why he shrunk from sharing the responsibility of this task—why, from that moment when he had first divined the share which Helen Rivière might bear in his cousin's flight, he had jealously kept the supposition to himself, and determined to follow up this accidental clue unaided and alone. But so it was. He felt that the girl's name was sacred; that his lips were sealed; that he, and he only, must seek and save her.

He thought of her perpetually. He could think, indeed, of nothing else. Throughout the weary, weary miles of travel, by night, by day, sleeping or waking, the remembrance of her peril was ever before him. He had beheld her face but twice in his life; yet it was as vividly present to him as if he had been familiar with its pale and tender beauty from his boyhood. It wrung his very heart to think of her eyes—those pathetic eyes, with that look of the caged chamois in them that he remembered so well. Then he would wonder vaguely whether they had always worn that expression? Whether he should ever see them lighted up with smiles? Whether she had ever known the joyous, thoughtless, sunshiny happiness of childhood, and had made her father's home musical with laughter?

Musing thus, while the unvaried flats of central France were gliding monotonously past the carriage windows, he would wander on into other and quite irrelevant speculations, wondering whether she remembered him? Whether she would know him again, if she met him? Whether she had ever thought of him since that day when they met at the Waterloo Bridge station, and he paid her fare from Sedgebrook? And then, at the end of all these tangled skeins of reverie would always come the one terrible question—did she love William Trefalden?

He told himself that it was impossible. He told himself over and over again that heaven was just and merciful, and would never condemn that pure young soul to so fatal an error; but while he reasoned, he trembled.

Supposing that this thing had really come to pass—what then? What if they were already married? The supposition was not to be endured, and yet it flashed upon him every now and then, like a sharp pang of physical pain. He might put it aside as resolutely as he would, but it came back and back again.

Whence this pain? Whence this anguish, this restless energy, this indomitable will, that knew neither fatigue, nor discouragement, nor shadow of turning? These were questions that he never asked himself. Had they been put to him, he would probably have replied that he compassionated Helen Rivière from the bottom of his heart, and that he would have felt the same, and done as much, for any other innocent and helpless girl in a similar position. It was pity. Pity, of course. What else should it be?

In this frame of mind, devoured by anxiety, and impelled by a restlessness that increased with every hour, the young man traversed the hundreds upon hundreds of miles between Bristol and Bordeaux, and now wandered eagerly about the far-spreading city and the endless quays, pursuing his search.

Of the Daughter of Ocean, he ascertained that she had arrived in port and was unlading somewhere below the bridge. Sent hither and thither, referred from one shipping agent to another, and confused by all sorts of contradictory directions, he had the greatest difficulty to find the steamer, and, when found, to gain a moment's hearing from those about her. Deserted, apparently, by her captain and crew, and given over to a swarm of blue-bloused porters, the Daughter of Ocean lay beside a wharf on the further side of the Garonne, undergoing a rapid clearance. The wharf was obstructed with crates, bales, and packing-cases; the porters came and went like bees about a hive; a French commis in a shaggy white hat, with a book under his arm and a pen behind his ear, stood by and took note of the goods as they were landed; and all was chatter, straw, bustle, and confusion. No one seemed able to give Saxon the least intelligence. The commis would scarcely listen to him, and the only person from whom he could extract a civil

word was a fat Englishman in a semi-nautical costume, whom he found in the saloon of the steamer, immersed in accounts. This person informed him that the captain was gone to Perigueux, and that the passengers had all been landed yesterday at the Quai Louis Philippe. As to where they might have gone after being once set ashore, that was nobody's business but their own. Perhaps it might be worth while to make inquiry at the passport-office, or the English consulate. He should do so himself if he were looking after any friends of his own.

So Saxon thanked the fat Englishman for his advice, and went to the consulate. The consul advised him to go to the préfet, and the préfet, after keeping him for more than an hour in a dismal waiting-room, referred him to the superintendent of the city police. This functionary, a fussy, inquisitive, self-important personage, entered Saxon's name in a big book, promised that he would communicate with the authorities of the passport-office, and desired monsieur to call again to-morrow between two and four.

The day dragged slowly by; and when at night he laid his weary head upon the pillow, Saxon felt as if he were further off than ever from success.

The next day, Saturday, was spent in the same unsatisfactory way. He wasted all the forenoon in hunting out one Philip Edmonds, first mate of the Daughter of Ocean, who was lodging at a little marine boarding-house on the opposite side of the river. This Edmonds at once remembered to have seen William Trefalden and Helen Rivière among the passengers. The lady was in deep mourning. They landed with the others at the Quai Louis Philippe. He had never spoken to either, and knew nothing of their ultimate destination. This was all that he had to tell.

Then Saxon went back to the quays, and inquired about the steamers that would sail next week for New York. He found that none had left Bordeaux since the Daughter of Ocean had come into port, and that the first departure would take place on the following Tuesday. By the time that these facts were ascertained, it was late enough to go to the superintendent's office. Here, however, he was requested to call again to-morrow, the police having as yet been unable to come at any satisfactory results. The vagueness of this statement, and the air of polite indifference with which it was conveyed to him by a bland official in the office, convinced Saxon that he had little to expect from aught but his own unaided efforts. That night, having since early morning paced untiringly about the quays and streets and public offices of Bordeaux, he lay down to rest, almost in despair.

CHAPTER XCI. SAXON STRIKES THE TRAIL IN A FRESH PLACE.

"Will monsieur have the goodness to write his name in the visitors' book?"

Saxon had finished his solitary breakfast and was looking dreamily out of the window of the salle-à-manger, when the head waiter laid the volume before him, and preferred the stereotyped request. Scarcely glancing at the motley signatures with which the page was nearly filled, the young man scrawled his own.

"Tiens," said the waiter, as Saxon completed the entry under its various headings. "Monsieur is Swiss?"

"I am. What of it?"

"Nothing—except that monsieur speaks with the purity of a Frenchman. There is a Swiss Protestant chapel in Bordeaux, if monsieur would wish to attend the service."

A new possibility suggested itself to Saxon.

"Is there any English Protestant chapel?" he asked, quickly.

"Mais, certainement, monsieur. On the Pavé des Chantrons. One may see it from this window."

And the waiter pointed out a modest white building, about a quarter of a mile away.

Saxon's heart bounded with hope renewed. The English Protestant chapel! What more likely than that Helen should find her way thither, this sunny Sunday morning? What more probable than that the English chaplain should be able to help him? How dull he had been, not to think of this before! Finding that it yet wanted nearly two hours to the time when service would begin, and that the chaplain lived near by, Saxon went at once to wait upon him. An old woman, however, opened the door to him, and informed him, with many curtseys, that her master was absent for six weeks' vacances, and that a strange gentleman had undertaken his duty in the mean while. As for the strange gentleman's name, she had not the remotest idea of it. It was "un nom Anglais—un nom excessivement difficile."

"If you will direct me where to find him," said Saxon, "I can dispense with his name."

"Mon Dieu, m'sieur, he is staying at Drouay!"

"Where, then, is Drouay?"

"Ah, c'est loin, m'sieur."

"What do you mean by far? How far?"

"More than three leagues, m'sieur. But he will be here to perform the service at half-past ten, and m'sieur can see him after it is over."

Forced to content himself with this prospect, Saxon then chatted awhile with the garrulous old femme de charge, and learned that Drouay was a little village in the heart of the wine-country north of Bordeaux; that the strange clergyman, being in delicate health, was staying there till the vintage-time should come round and enable him to take the benefit of the grape-cure; that her own master was the best man in the world; that the chapel was très laide; that the attendance at this season was very scanty; that the voluntary contributions were much less than they should be; and so forth, till he succeeded in effecting his escape.

At length half-past ten o'clock came round. His thoughts were busy with the things of the world, and he felt that he had no power to abstract them. He felt that he could no more lay down his burden upon that sacred threshold as he ought to lay it down, than he could lay down his personality; so he remained outside the door and watched the congregation passing in. But

he watched in vain. Among the women came no Helen Rivière—among the men no William Trefalden. By-and-by, he heard the psalm-singing through the half-opened windows, and now and then a faint echo of the voice of the preacher. At length, after a service that seemed to him as if it would never end, the worshippers came out again and went their several ways. He then entered the chapel, begged the favour of five minutes' conversation with the officiating clergyman, and was shown into the vestry.

A fragile-looking young man of about six or seven-and-twenty received him politely, pointed to a seat, and begged to know in what manner he could have the pleasure of being useful to him.

Saxon had no difficulty in telling his story. He had told it so often, and always with the same reservations on one or two points, that it now came to his lips with the readiness of an established formula.

He was in search of two friends who, he had reason to believe, had lately arrived in Bordeaux. The gentleman was a near relative of his own, and he was intimately acquainted with the family of the lady. Her name was Rivière. She was about seventeen or eighteen years of age, and dressed in deep mourning. He was the bearer of very important intelligence, and had travelled from England expressly to see these friends, if only he were so fortunate as to obtain some definite information respecting them. And then he concluded with an apology for the trouble that he was giving, and the time that his narrative occupied in the telling.

The clergyman, sitting with one hand over his mouth, and his eyes fixed attentively upon the ground, heard him to the end, and then, in a very quiet clear voice, said:

"Will you oblige me with your name?"

"Certainly. My name is Trefalden."

"Is Trefalden also the name of your relative?"

Saxon hesitated.

"I do not think that he is travelling under that name," he replied, with some embarrassment.

"Do you mean, Mr. Trefalden, that your friend is travelling under an assumed name?"

"I mean—that is, I believe—he is travelling under the name of Forsyth."

The clergyman pressed his fingers nervously against his lips.

"This is strange," he said.

"If you know anything, for Heaven's sake do not hesitate to tell it!" cried Saxon, impetuously.

"I am bound to hesitate," replied the clergyman. "I do not know whether I ought"

"If it be your duty to help the helpless and baffle the unrighteous, you ought—believe me, sir, you *ought*—to speak!"

The young clergyman looked at him fixedly, and after a moment's pause, replied:

"I do believe you, Mr. Trefalden. I also believe that I am engaged to marry those two persons to-morrow at Drouay."

Saxon changed colour, opened his lips as if about to speak, checked himself, stood up, sat down again, and said in a low deep voice:

"I am glad to find that I am in time."

"To be present at their wedding?"

"No—to prevent it."

The clergyman looked as if he had half anticipated this reply.

"If I am to refuse to perform the ceremony, Mr. Trefalden, you must furnish me with an adequate reason," said he.

Saxon was sorely tried between his desire to screen the good Trefalden name, and the obvious necessity for stating his case plainly.

"If I place a great confidence in you," he said, presently, "will you promise not to betray it?"

"Unquestionably."

Saxon looked at him as if he would fain read his very heart.

"You are an utter stranger to me," he said; "but I think you are a man of honour. I will trust you."

And then, having looked out into the chapel and seen that there was no one within hearing, Saxon sat down and related all the story of his cousin's perfidy.

CHAPTER XCII. MR. GUTHRIE'S TESTIMONY.

The clergyman's name was Guthrie. He was lodging at the house of a small propriétaire at Drouay, as the old femme de charge had said, for his health; and hither, according to the statement which he gave in return for Saxon's confidence, a gentleman came out from Bordeaux to visit him in the evening of the foregoing Wednesday—that is to say, on the evening of the very day that the Daughter of Ocean landed her passengers at the Quai Louis Philippe. This gentleman said that his name was Forsyth. The object of his visit was to engage Mr. Guthrie to perform the ceremony of marriage between himself and a lady then staying at the Hôtel de Nantes in Bordeaux. Mr. Guthrie arranged to marry them on the Saturday, and this matter disposed of, Mr. Forsyth, who was a remarkably pleasant person, made some observations about Drouay, and asked if there were any apartments to be had in the neighbourhood. He then added, that the lady whom he was about to make his wife had lately lost a near relative, and would be glad to escape from the noise and bustle of Bordeaux to so retired a spot. Mr. Guthrie then volunteered to accompany him to a little château near by, which was to be let furnished, and Mr. Forsyth engaged the first floor on the spot. There was at first some little difficulty about the matter, as the propriétaire was unwilling to let any part of his house for less than one month; but Mr. Forsyth, who was apparently as rich as he was agreeable, offered a fortnight's rent in advance, and promised that, although the lady would probably not remain there more than a week, the whole month should be paid if her occupation of the rooms caused monsieur le propriétaire to lose a more advantageous tenant. The next morning he escorted Miss Rivière to Drouay, installed her at the Château de Peyrolles, and having introduced her to Mr. Guthrie, and recommended her to that gentleman's care and attention, took his leave.

Mr. Guthrie had at that time no idea that his new acquaintances had only arrived in Bordeaux the day before; or that they had travelled direct from England. He first learned these facts from Miss Rivière. He was exceedingly surprised when she further informed him that they were about to proceed to New York by the next steamer leaving Bordeaux. If Miss Rivière had not spoken of their plans so simply, and been in such profound sorrow for the loss of her mother, he would have perhaps suspected a clandestine match; but as it was, he only wondered en passant at the oddity of their arrangements, and then dismissed the subject from his mind. On the Friday Mr. Forsyth came down to Drouay to call upon Miss Rivière, and, at her desire, postponed the marriage till Monday. It seemed to Mr. Guthrie that Miss Rivière was perfectly willing to become the wife of Mr. Forsyth. The love was unquestionably on his side; but she seemed to hold him in the highest possible respect, and to look up to him in all things. Having so recently lost her mother, however, it was natural that the young lady should be anxious to wait as long as might be practicable before contracting this new tie. As the arrangement now stood, Mr. Guthrie was to perform the ceremony privately at the Château de Peyrolles on Monday afternoon, and the newly-married pair were to embark on board the American mail steam-packet Washington for New York direct on Tuesday morning. Mr. Guthrie added, that he had found himself much interested in Miss Rivière. He had lent her some books, called upon her several times, and done what he could to alleviate the monotony of her brief sojourn at Drouay. In the mean while Mr. Forsyth, through respect for her grief and her solitude, had with much delicacy kept aloof from the Château de Peyrolles, and had, in fact, only been down once from Bordeaux since Miss Rivière's arrival there. Mr. Guthrie believed that Mr. Forsyth had since then gone upon business to Angoulême.

Here the clergyman's testimony ended.

CHAPTER XCIII. THE CHATEAU DE PEYROLLES.

A TINY white building in the French mediæval style, with some six or eight glittering extinguisher turrets, a wholly unreasonable number of very small windows, and a weedy court-yard with massive wooden gates, was the Château de Peyrolles. The house was white; the jalousies were white; the gates were white. In short, a more comfortless and ghost-like dwelling it would be difficult to find, even in the south of France. Built upon a slight—a very slight—eminence, it overlooked a wide district of vineyards, and stood islanded, as it were, in the midst of an endless green lake, which stretched away for miles on every side. Here and there rose a cluster of village roofs, surmounted by a landmark of church-spire; here and there the peaked roof of some stately château; but the villages were few, and the châteaux far between. A long straight road, bordered on each side by tall poplars, swept through the heart of this district, passing close beside the gates of the Château de Peyrolles, and vanishing away into the extreme distance, like an avenue in a perspective drawing.

Along this road—the vines, heavy with black grapes, coming down in most places to the wayside, with now and then a patch of coarse pasture in between—Saxon drove from Bordeaux to Drouay that memorable Sunday afternoon. He had taken a light carriage and four good post-horses from his hotel, and so went over the ground at a brilliant pace. The Reverend Angus Guthrie, having made his afternoon discourse of the very briefest, accompanied him. They spoke but seldom, exchanging now and then a word or two on the coming vintage, or the weather, which had become heavily overcast within the last two hours and threatened a storm; but as the road lengthened behind them, their observations became fewer, and then altogether ceased.

"This is Drouay," said the clergyman, after a silence of more than half an hour.

Saxon started and looked out of the window.

"And that little white building?

"The Château de Peyrolles."

A strange feeling of agitation and reluctance came upon him.

"Now that it comes to the point," said he, "I feel like a coward."

"I do not wonder at it," replied Mr. Guthrie; "you have a painful duty before you."

"Still, you do not think she loves him?"

"I do not, indeed."

"I wish to Heaven I could be sure of that," said Saxon, earnestly—so earnestly, that the young clergyman looked up at him like a man who is suddenly enlightened.

"In any case, Mr. Trefalden," he replied, "you could only do what you are now doing. Mercy under these circumstances would be cruel injustice. Shall we alight here? Perhaps it would be better than driving up to the château."

The postilions had pulled up before the door of the village auberge; so the travellers got out, and went up the private road on foot.

"You don't think it would come better from yourself, being a clergyman?" said Saxon, as Mr. Guthrie rang for admission.

The clergyman shook his head.

"Certainly not. I could only repeat what I have been told; you can tell what you know."

"True."

"But, if you prefer it, I will see Miss Rivière first, and prepare her for your visit."

"Thanks—thanks a thousand times."

An elderly woman opened the door, smiling and curtseying. Mam'selle, she said, was in the grande salon "au premier;" so Mr. Guthrie went up, while Saxon waited in a little anteroom on the ground floor.

He was cruelly nervous. He tried to think what he ought to say, and how he ought to begin; but he could not put the words together in his mind, and when the clergyman came back at the end of ten minutes, it seemed to him as if he had not been absent as many seconds.

"I have given her your card," said Mr.

Guthrie, "and told her that you are Mr. Forsyth's cousin. Go up to the first landing, and through the door that faces you as you ascend the stairs. I will wait here for you."

He went up, his heart beating painfully against his side; and then he paused a moment outside the door.

CHAPTER XCIV. WHAT PITY IS AKIN TO.

He found himself in a small outer salon opening through wide folding-doors into a large room beyond. A dark figure sitting beside an open window rose slowly at his approach, and a very low soft voice, in reply to his muttered salutation, bade him be seated.

"I trust," he said, "that Miss Rivière will pardon an intrusion which must seem unpardonable till it is explained."

"You are welcome, sir," she replied. "If only as Mr. Forsyth's relative"

She raised her eyes to his face for the first time, faltered, coloured crimson, and, after a moment's hesitation, added:

"I think we have met before."

Saxon bowed profoundly.

"I believe," he said, "that I once had the honour of being useful to you for a few moments."

"You never gave me any opportunity of—of thanking you, Mr. Trefalden," she said, pressing her hands tightly together in her extremity of embarrassment.

"You gave me more thanks at the time, madam, than were merited by so trifling a service," replied Saxon; his self-possession all coming back to him at the sight of her timidity. "It seems strange that we should next meet in so very different a place."

"Very strange."

"But I had so much difficulty to trace you here, that I began to fear we should not meet at all."

"Do you come from Angoulême?"

"No; I have followed you from England."

"Indeed? I—I thought you had perhaps met Mr. Forsyth in Angoulême, and"

"My cousin does not know that I am in France," replied Saxon, gravely.

"How happy he will be to see you!"

Saxon looked down in silence.

"And—and he will be here in about an hour and a half," added Miss Rivière, with a glance at the pendule on the mantelshelf.

"This evening?"

"Yes. He returns to Bordeaux to-day, and will lodge to-night at the auberge in the village."

As she said this, Miss Rivière, surprised by the undemonstrative way in which Saxon received her information, again lifted her eyes.

"I—I hope there is nothing the matter," she said, anxiously.

Saxon hesitated.

"I cannot say that I am the bearer of good news," he replied.

"Oh dear, I am so sorry!"

"I am sorry too," said he; "more sorry than I can tell you."

The compassionate reluctance of his manner seemed to startle her.

"What do you mean?" she said, with evident apprehension.

"I mean, that it grieves me to the soul to inflict the pain which my intelligence must give you."

"Must give *me!*" she faltered, looking for an instant quite white and scared. Then, smiling sadly, she shook her head, and turned her face away. "Ah no," she said; "that is all over."

"If I could indeed believe, Miss Rivière, that you would be indifferent to the tale I have to tell, my anxiety would be at an end," said Saxon, eagerly. "Will you forgive me if I ask you a very strange question?"

"I—I think so."

"Do you love my cousin?"

Miss Rivière turned a shade paler, and said with some dignity:

"Mr. Forsyth is my best friend in the world—my only friend—and I honour him as he deserves to be honoured."

"But if he were *not* your best friend, Miss Rivière? If instead of doing you service, he had done you wrong? If that honour which you pay to him were utterly unmerited—what then? Nay, forgive me—I do not wish to alarm you; but I am here to-day to tell you terrible truths, and I now only implore you to listen to them patiently."

"I am quite willing to hear what you have to say, Mr. Trefalden," Miss Rivière replied; "but my faith in your cousin will not be easily shaken."

"My own faith in him was not easily shaken," said Saxon. "Like yourself, I believed him to be my friend."

"Of what offence do you accuse him?"

"He has robbed me."

"Robbed you?"

"Yes—of two millions of money."

Miss Rivière looked at him with a sort of incredulous bewilderment.

"Of money?" she faltered. "You say that he has robbed you of money?"

"I trusted him with two millions, and he has robbed me of every farthing," replied the young man, pitilessly direct. "Nor is this all. He has robbed your cousin, Lord Castletowers, of twenty-five thousand pounds more."

"Mr. Forsyth does not know Lord Castletowers."

"Mr. Forsyth may not know Lord Castletowers, but William Trefalden, the attorney-at-law—knows him perfectly well."

"William Trefalden—who is he?"

"William Trefalden is Mr. Forsyth—William Trefalden is my cousin—William Trefalden is the man to whom Miss Rivière was about to give her hand to-morrow."

The young girl half rose from her chair, and Saxon could see that she was trembling from head to foot.

"I do not believe it!" she exclaimed. "It is monstrous—incredible!"

"It is true."

"What proof have you?"

"Not much; yet, I think, enough to con-

vince you. Do you know my cousin's handwriting?"

"Yes."

Saxon took a card from his purse, and laid it before her.

"Do you recognise it?"

"Yes—this is his hand."

"Read it."

The young lady read aloud: "'*Mrs. Rivière, Beaufort Villa, St. John's Wood.*' What does this mean? We never lived at St. John's Wood."

"Yet that is the address which William Trefalden left at Brudenell-terrace, when you removed to Sydenham."

"That is very strange!"

Saxon produced a crumpled letter, and laid that also before her.

"Do you recognise his handwriting here as well?"

"Undoubtedly. Am I to read it?"

Saxon hesitated.

"It—it is his farewell letter to a poor woman he once loved," he said. "There is nothing in it that you may not read if you wish it."

Miss Rivière read, and returned it in silence.

"You observe the signature?"

"I do."

"You see that you have been imposed upon by a false name, and that others have been imposed upon by a false address?"

"Yes—I see it; but I do not understand"

"Will you tell me how it was that you could not leave word with your landlady to what seaport you were going when you left Sydenham?"

"Mr. Forsyth did not decide upon Clevedon till we reached Paddington."

"Can you tell me why you have been taken from London to Clevedon, from Clevedon to Bristol, from Bristol to Bordeaux, instead of embarking direct for the States from either Southampton or Liverpool?"

"I do not know—I was not aware that we were pursuing an unusual route."

"But you see it now?"

"I see that we have made an unnecessary détour; but I do not know why . . ."

"Permit me to tell you why. Because this journey is not the journey of an honest man, but the flight of a felon—a flight planned for months beforehand, and planned with no other end in view than to baffle inquiry and defeat pursuit. You leave Brudenell-terrace, and, thanks to the false address given, all trace of you is lost. You leave Sydenham, uncertain of your destination. You spend a few days at an obscure watering-place in the West of England, and then embark on board a merchant steamer plying at uncertain dates between Bristol and Bordeaux. With what object?—simply that you may take your passage out to America from a French port, instead of sailing direct from London, Southampton, or Liverpool. In order to do this, you perform a tedious journey and lose many days by the way; while, had you started from Liverpool, you would by this time have been within a few hours of New York. But then William Trefalden had committed a gigantic fraud, and he well knew that none of our great English ports were safe for him. He knew that my agents might be waiting for him at every point from which he would be likely to escape; but who would suspect him at Bristol? Who would confront him at Bordeaux? Who would arrest him as he landed, and say, 'Give up the two millions you have stolen, and resign the lady you have wronged?'"

Miss Rivière listened, her eyes fixed, her lips parted, her face becoming gradually paler, as Saxon, in the intensity of his earnestness, laid his facts and inferences one by one before her.

Then the young man paused, seeing that she was convinced, but grieved also at the cost of how rude a shock that conviction was purchased.

"These are cruel truths," he said; "but what can I do? *I must* undeceive you. I have tracked you from house to house, from city to city, for no other purpose than to save you from the fate to which you are devoting yourself; and now the minutes are going fast, and I am forced to speak plainly, or it will soon be too late to speak at all!"

Miss Rivière wrung her hands despairingly.

"Oh, mother! mother!" she cried, piteously, "why are you not here to tell me what I ought to do?"

"You believe? You are convinced?"

"Yes—alas! I am convinced; but shall I forget that this man was my father's early friend—my mother's benefactor?"

"If William Trefalden told you that he was your father's early friend, Miss Rivière, it was as false as the name under which he made himself known to you!"

"Ah, you do not know all that he did to serve us! You do not know how he sought us out when we were in poverty, how he"

"Pardon me—I *do* know it. He sought you out, because I gave him your card, and requested him to do so. He bought your father's paintings on my account solely; and he never saw Mr. Rivière in his life. I never meant to tell you; but this leaves me no option."

The young girl covered her face with her hands and wept silently. Her tears went straight to Saxon's heart. He felt an inexpressible desire to take her in his arms, and tell her that he would give his life to comfort and protect her. But not daring to do this, he only said, in his boyish way:

"Pray don't cry. It makes me feel that I have been very cruel to you!"

But she made no reply.

"I cannot tell you," he went on, "what I have suffered in the thought of inflicting this suffering upon you. I would have borne the double share gladly, if I could. Do you forgive me?"

Still she wept on. He ventured a little nearer.

"I know how hard it is," he said, tenderly. "I have had to go through it all. He was my friend, and I thought he was the very soul of honour. I would hardly have believed it if an angel from heaven had told me that he would be false to his trust!"

"But he was my only friend!" sobbed the girl. "My only friend in all the world!"

"No, no," cried Saxon, "not your only friend! Don't say that! Don't think it! Look up—look in my face, and see if it is not the face of a truer man than William Trefalden!"

And so, kneeling down before her to bring his face upon a nearer level, the young man touched her hands timidly, as if he would fain draw them away, yet dared not take them in his own.

"Do look at me!" he pleaded. "Only once—only for one moment!"

She lifted her face, all pale with tears, and glancing at him shyly, tremblingly, like a frightened child, saw something in his eyes which brought the colour back to her cheek in a flood of sudden scarlet.

"Oh, if I only dared to tell you!" he said, passionately. "May I?—may I?"

He took her hands in his—she did not withdraw them. He kissed them; first one and then the other. He leaned closer—closer.

"I love you, Helen," he whispered. "Can you forget all this misery, and be my little wife? My home is in Switzerland, where I have a dear father who is a pastor. We are a simple people, and we lead a simple life among our flocks and pastures; but we are no traitors. We neither betray our friends nor deceive those we love. Tell me, darling, will you love me a little? Will you come and live with me among my own beautiful Alps, far, far away?"

She smiled. He took that smile for his answer, and kissed the lips that gave it; and then, for a few minutes, they laughed and cried and rejoiced together, like children who have found a treasure.

"You must wear this till I can get you a smaller one," said Saxon, taking a ring from his finger and putting it upon hers.

"It is very beautiful," said Helen. "What is it?—a crystal?"

"No, a diamond."

"A diamond! I did not think there were any real diamonds in the world so large as that!"

"I will give you a necklace of them, every one bigger than this."

"What are you, then? A prince?"

"A citizen-farmer of the Swiss Republic."

"Then the Swiss are very rich?"

"Not they, indeed; but I am the richest man in the Canton Grisons, and my wife will be a great lady—as great a lady as her aunt, Lady Castletowers."

"Do you know Lady Castletowers?"

"Yes; her son is my most intimate friend. He is the dearest fellow in the world. You will be so fond of him!"

"I do not know any of my relations," said Helen, sadly, "except my aunt Alethea—and she does not love me."

"She will find out that she loves you dearly when you wear your diamonds," laughed Saxon, his arm round her waist, and his curls brushing her cheek.

Helen sighed, and laid her head wearily against his shoulder.

"I do not want Lady Castletowers to love me," she said; "and I do not care for diamonds. I wish we were going to be poor, Saxon."

"Why so, Helen?"

"Because—because I fancy poor-people are happier, and love each other better than rich people. My father and mother were very, very poor, and"

"They never loved each other half so much as we shall love each other!" interrupted Saxon, impetuously. "I could not love you one jot more if I were as poor as Adam."

"Are you sure of that?"

"As sure as that I am the happiest fellow in all the world! But tell me, Helen, did you never care for William Trefalden? Never at all?"

Helen shook her head.

"I respected him," she said. "I was grateful."

"But did you not love him a little?"

"No."

"Not in the least?"

"Not in the very least."

"And yet you would have married him!"

"Think how lonely I was."

"That is true—poor little Helen!"

"And he loved me. He was the only person in all the world who loved me."

"Except myself."

"Ah, but I could not know that! When did you first begin to love me, Saxon?"

"I hardly know. I think ever since I found you were in danger of marrying William Trefalden. And you?"

"I shall not tell you."

"Nay, that is not fair."

"Indeed I will not."

"Then I shall conclude that you do not love me at all."

"No, no!"

"Positively yes."

She turned her face away, half crying, half laughing.

"You have been my hero," she whispered, "ever since the day of our first meeting."

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AT THE BAR.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "A CRUISE UPON WHEELS," &c. &c.

CHAPTER XXXII. THE SCALE TURNS THIS WAY AND THAT.

IT has been seen already that Gilbert Penmore had not approached the arduous task which he had set himself, without seeking and obtaining such assistance as he felt might really be of use to him. It has already been mentioned that during the time that he had been in the habit of attending court, Gilbert had made some acquaintances among his brethren of the robe. One of these, a man older than Penmore, and of some considerable experience, had volunteered, on first hearing of the projected defence, to assist him in any way in his power, and to him Gilbert had confided the task of cross-examining such witnesses as it might be deemed advisable to subject to that ordeal. So when the examination in chief of Jane Cantanker had come to an end, this gentleman, whose name, as the reader perhaps remembers, was Steel, rose in his place, and begging her to remain in the witness-box a few minutes longer, proceeded to ask her certain questions, somewhat to the following purpose:

"You remarked just now," he said, "that the deceased seemed very drowsy and sleepy when you went up-stairs to assist her in going to bed."

"Yes, sir, I did."

"Now, will you tell me whether you have not sometimes observed this before?"

The witness hesitated a little here, and seemed inclined to avoid the question.

"Well," she said at last, "I suppose everybody shows a little drowsiness now and then, just at bedtime."

"Yes, but at other times—*not* at bedtime. Have you not sometimes observed this tendency to drowsiness in your mistress?"

At this question Serjeant Probyn and Mr. Pry were observed to whisper together a good deal. It had just begun to dawn upon them in what direction the defence would turn.

The witness hesitated a good deal in her answers. "N—n—no, she did not know that she had observed anything of the sort—nothing out of the way."

"Nothing out of the way, eh? But still you have observed such a thing now and then?"

"Her mistress was sleepy sometimes," the witness said. "Most people were."

What can we gather of the nature of evidence, as given in court, from the reports which appear of the different trials. The manner, nay, the look even, of a witness is sometimes, as far as the convincing of the jury goes, a form of evidence of the greatest importance, and many decisions which astonish us on paper would surprise us not at all if we had been present in court while the case in question was being tried. The impression left on the minds of those before whom Jane Cantanker spoke, was that she was very much understating the truth in her answers. The next question was what the schoolmen call a "crucial" one:

"Have you ever known your mistress take anything to make her sleepy?"

"I don't know what you mean, sir."

"Don't you? Well, I will put it more plainly, then," said Mr. Steel. "Did you ever know your mistress to take laudanum, or any other form of opium?"

The witness waited a moment. "No, sir, certainly not," she said, with something of indignation. But Mr. Steel had not done yet.

"Did you ever know your mistress to have laudanum, or any other form of opium, in her possession?" This question after a suggestion by Gilbert.

Again that pause, which invested the answer, when it came, with so much of insincerity. "I suppose every one has had something of the sort in the house at some time or other."

"Yes, yes, no doubt: but I want to know if your mistress ever had it?"

"She had some once—a little," said the woman, sullenly.

"Oh, she had some once. How did you come to be aware of that fact?"

"I saw some on the chimney-piece in her bedroom, when I went to call her one morning."

"And how much may there have been?"

"I can't say, certainly. It was a small bottle and about half full."

"Was your mistress particularly difficult to arouse that morning?"

"She was always rather heavy in the morning. It's some people's nature."

"And on this particular morning she was not especially so?"

"I don't remember. Nothing remarkable, I should say."

"Did your mistress say anything to you on the subject of the bottle of laudanum?"

"She asked me what I was looking at."

"Did she seem to be displeased that you had perceived it?"

"Well—rather—perhaps," with great hesitation.

"'Rather.' Come, you must know."

"I can't say with certainty."

All these answers were given with the most dogged sullenness.

"Why, how long ago was it?"

"Oh, it may have been a month or six weeks before her death."

"Did your mistress leave the bottle where it was after she had noticed that you had observed it?"

"No."

"What did she do with it, then?"

"She got out of bed, and put it away."

"And where did she put it?"

"She thrust it into the bosom of her dressing-gown, as far as I can remember. I left the room soon after, and saw no more of it."

"Now, Jane Cantanker," Mr. Steel resumed, very seriously, "I have one more question to ask you. Is this the only occasion on which you have observed laudanum, or any other preparation of opium, to be in the possession of the deceased?"

The witness waited some seconds, and then replied:

"Yes, that was the only occasion."

The witness was then told that she might leave the box. She seemed much agitated, and not a little exhausted by the length and arduousness of the examination through which she had passed.

The next person examined was the surgeon to the police force, Dr. Giles. He deposed to having been sent for hastily to the house in Beaumont-street. The deceased was quite dead when he arrived; had been so for perhaps two hours, more or less. He directed that the body should be left just as it was till he could return and make a post-mortem examination, and he especially intimated a wish that nothing should be done that might remove the smell of opium, which was very obvious, from deceased's mouth. That injunction was given, because he thought the presence of such smell was an important indication in the case. When he returned in the afternoon he was accompanied by a friend, and they proceeded at once to investigate the cause of death. He then went into all the medical details of the case, stating at length, and with many technicalities, how he had examined the different organs of the deceased; how they were, on the whole, healthy, though there were indications of such a tendency to unsoundness, or rather weakness, he would say, about the heart as would render the deceased particularly susceptible to the fatal effects of opium, or probably any other narcotic influence. There was nothing there, however, to be the cause of death. The deceased might have lived for years with a heart in that state—but for the opium. That was the cause of death, beyond a doubt. He had examined the stomach very carefully. There was the remains of a meal found in it, and there was, moreover, a certain amount of porter or stout. He had detected unmistakable indications of the presence of opium. He should say in the form of laudanum. There was sufficient to cause death, especially in a person whose heart was in the condition in which he had described the heart of deceased to be. He had no hesitation in stating his firm conviction, founded on considerable professional experience, that in this case the cause of death was the opium which he had found in the body of deceased. He spoke very confidently.

This gentleman's opinion was entirely corroborated by his colleague, who had assisted him in the examination. There was no doubt in his mind either that the deceased lady had died from the effects of poisoning by opium.

The chemist who sold the laudanum to Gabrielle was next placed in the box. He simply repeated what the reader has already heard, mentioning the quantity sold, what it was required for, and the date of the transaction. He, moreover, identified the bottle which was found in Mrs. Penmore's box as one which had come from his establishment.

The evidence of the cause of death was thus made complete. Moreover, the existence of the poison by which the deceased lady died, in the possession of the prisoner, was proved, and it had also been shown that abundant opportunity of administering such poison had been afforded to the accused on the night preceding Miss Carrington's death. It remained to strengthen—though indeed it hardly appeared necessary—the evidence as to motive. With this view some of the late Miss Carrington's friends, some of those residing at the neighbouring boarding-house, were next called.

Captain Rawlings Scraper was placed in the witness-box, and duly sworn.

Mr. Pry. You are a captain in her Majesty's service?

Witness. I am.

Mr. Pry. At present on half-pay?

Witness. I beg to state that that is also the case.

Mr. Pry. You were acquainted with the late Miss Carrington?

Witness. Yes, I was—indeed, I may say that I was well acquainted with her.

Mr. Pry. You were, doubtless, in the habit at different times of conversing with her on a great variety of topics?

Witness. Oh yes, a great variety. In fact, I may say a very great variety. I was, it may be interesting to the court to know, in the habit of giving her advice—which she was good enough to say she valued very highly—on a great many

subjects, as to the distribution, or rather investment, of her property, as to the purchase of such small quantities of wine as she might have need of, or even on matters of a hygienic nature —it being a subject——

The younger of the two judges on the bench here interposed, and remarked that this evidence was hardly relevant. Mr. Pry took the hint, and brought his man back with all speed.

Mr. Pry. I will not trouble you just now, Captain Scraper, to give us your views upon diet, which, I have no doubt, are valuable enough in themselves. What I wish to ask you is, whether on any occasion you have heard the deceased lady make allusion to anything unpleasant in connexion with the relations which existed between herself and the prisoner?

Witness. I really am unable at this moment to recollect.

Mr. Pry. Perhaps you will try to tax your memory a little more closely.

Witness. I believe I have heard Miss Carrington remark that some of the household arrangements in Beaumont-street were not quite to her taste, and that when she had made objection to these, it had led more than once to difference of opinion. Indeed, now I think of it, I have heard Miss Carrington say that when she had alluded, in the presence of Mrs. Penmore, to some advice which I myself had given to the deceased, it was not well received.

Mr. Pry. Not well received, just so—a carping spirit shown, no doubt?

Witness. No doubt. I am not able to say with certainty, but no doubt. I am always very cautious how I commit myself to anything which I have not actually heard with my own ears, having, in the course of my long experience of military life—a life in which gossip and——

Mr. Pry, again admonished by the judge, intimated to the captain at this point that the court would not trouble him to relate his military experiences, and was about to suggest his withdrawal from the box, when Mr. Steel, for the other side, stood up, and expressed his wish to ask the witness a question before he left the box.

Mr. Steel. Have you ever, Captain Scraper, in the course of your friendly intercourse with the late Miss Carrington, observed anything remarkable about her—any tendency, for instance, to great changeableness, at one time being sleepy and heavy, and at another unusually excited or irritable?

The captain stated without much circumlocution that he had observed such changes of mood in the course of his acquaintance, and that he had even commented on it to intimate friends.

Miss Preedy, a resident, as it may perhaps be remembered, in the same house with Captain Scraper, fully corroborated the evidence given by that gentleman, and also bore a similar testimony to the strange variations in the late Miss Carrington's bearing and demeanour at different times. As the evidence was getting to be rather strong on this particular point, this lady was subjected to re-examination when her cross-examination was over. She was re-examined by Serjeant Probyn.

The Serjeant. You state that you have observed a great variation of manner in your late friend on certain occasions. Will you be good enough to inform the court exactly what you mean by that statement.

Witness. I hardly know. It is difficult to explain what I mean.

The Serjeant. Are you quite sure that you understand what you mean, yourself?

Witness. I don't know, I'm sure. I think my meaning was that she was a little flighty and odd sometimes. You couldn't depend upon always finding her in the same mood. She would be different at different times.

The Serjeant. And will you tell me, Miss Preedy, standing in that solemn position in which you are placed, that you ever knew any one who was *not* different at different times? Really, my lords, I must contend that this is but a desultory and gossiping kind of evidence, and hardly fit in a case of such awful importance to occupy the time of the court or the attention of the jury.

The court ruled, however, that it was legitimate evidence, and that it should be taken for what it was worth. The witness was then permitted to stand down.

And now there remained but two more witnesses to be examined to make the case for the prosecution complete. The first of these was the policeman who had been employed to search the room occupied by the prisoner in the house in Beaumont-street. He was placed in the box immediately, and examined by the junior counsel for the prosecution.

Mr. Pry. You were directed, I believe, to search the premises in Beaumont-street, with a view of ascertaining if there were any indications of the poison called laudanum having recently been in possession of the prisoner?

Witness. Yes, sir. Me and another constable of the same division were told off for that duty.

Mr. Pry. Will you tell the jury what you discovered?

Witness. Well, sir, for a long time we couldn't find what we were in search of. We looked through all the drawers, and in the cupboards, and every place we could think of, till at last my mate he caught sight of a box that was stowed away under the bed, and pulling it out and finding it locked, we had to make application for the key, and that being handed over, and everything taken out of the box—miscellaneous articles of all kinds—we found at the bottom of everything the bottle we were looking for.

Mr. Pry. The bottle produced just now in court, and identified by the chemist who sold it —Mr. Cook?

Witness. The same, sir.

Cross-examined by Mr. Steel.

Mr. Steel. Were you the constable who went

to the shop of Mr. Cook to make inquiry as to whether he had sold some laudanum recently to the accused?

Witness.—Yes, sir, I was.

Mr. Steel. Did he say anything to you as to any caution he had given to the purchaser when he sold the laudanum?

Witness. Yes, sir. He said that it was always his custom, when he sold such poisonous drugs, to caution the parties buying them to keep them out of the way in some place of security.

The other witness to be examined was the solicitor who had been in the habit of attending to Miss Carrington's affairs. He deposed that the deceased lady had died intestate, and that he possessed the draught of a will drawn up in accordance with the wishes of the deceased, by which her property was bequeathed to some distant relations, with whom she had formerly resided. That will had never been signed, and was mere waste paper. The husband of the prisoner, and his brothers and sister, were next of kin to the late Miss Carrington, and there being no valid will, her property would be divided among them. It was elicited in cross-examination, however, that the husband of the accused had refused, under the circumstances, to accept his share of the property, having made it over to the persons named in the invalid will.

This statement seemed to make a considerable sensation in court. The last witness had been examined for the prosecution, doubtless with the view of proving an additional motive for the crime with which Mrs. Penmore was charged, in her desire to secure the share in Miss Carrington's property, which would fall to her husband should the deceased die intestate. The fact, which was elicited in cross-examination, caused the evidence of this witness to be, in point of fact, favourable to the defence.

Serjeant Probyn now rose, intimated that he had no more witnesses to examine, and that

This was the case for the prosecution.

It is hoped that all this time the reader has kept before him two figures of such pre-eminent interest that the eyes of all persons in court were continually returning to them throughout the trial. First, that poor little, forlorn, helpless woman sitting in the dock, motionless, with hands joined in her lap, and understanding but faintly much that has been going on, and next, the pale, anxious-looking young advocate in the barristers' quarter, on whom nothing has been lost throughout—no, not so much as a word, and who has sat watching and waiting—eager for the conflict to begin, in which he is to fight à outrance for a life more precious to him than aught else in the world.

The progress of the trial was now suspended for a few minutes, to give an opportunity of taking refreshment to those persons who needed it. Among those who were gathered together to watch the issue of this exciting case, there was at this time a great buzz of talking. The remarks, which during the progress of the trial could only be made in a hurried half-intelligible whisper, were now allowed a free vent, and speculations as to the direction which the case was taking abounded on all sides. At this time it seemed to most men that the prospects of the defence looked very bad indeed. The evidence on the other side was really, as it appeared, overwhelming and impregnable. The line about to be taken by the defence had already been plainly indicated by the nature of the cross-examination to which Jane Cantanker and Captain Scraper had been subjected. The issue of such cross-examination had been, to some extent, favourable to the defence; but a very small advance only had been gained. An hypothesis had been to a certain extent set up, and had to some small extent received support. It had been proved that the deceased lady had once, though some time previous to her death, had laudanum in her possession, and two witnesses had stated their impression that they had observed certain characteristics about the conduct of the deceased lady which might possibly, but which it was equally possible might *not*, have resulted from the practice of taking opium. If the defence had no more conclusive proof with which to back up their theory than this that had appeared, there would be but little chance for its successful issue.

Such were the speculations with which all persons assembled in the court-house of the Old Bailey, on the day whose events we are describing, were occupying themselves during the brief period which had, at this stage of the trial, been allowed to elapse, before that second part of it, which was so eagerly anticipated by all that great assembly, commenced.

The interval was a short one, and very soon the usher of the court was once again proclaiming silence, as the judges resumed their seats, and all those officially employed about the place settled themselves anew to their respective functions.

The injunction of the usher was obeyed with a singular alacrity. The hum of talk among the assembled spectators ceased in an instant. The members of the public press, who had been busily employed a moment before in comparing their reports of all that had taken place, helping each other wherever there was any hiatus or doubtful passage, dropped silent into their respective seats, even the lawyers, who had been talking so eagerly among themselves, bandying from one to another the last piece of news, true or otherwise, which was in circulation about this strange cause, even these gentlemen ceased for the moment to utter so much as a whisper.

There was a great silence then in the court, as a young man, dressed in the costume of an advocate, and deadly pale, rose from his seat among the benches assigned to the barristers, and glancing once at some papers which he held in his hand, prepared to address the jury.

At the moment when the young advocate stood up, the prisoner in the dock suffered her head to

fall somewhat forward on her breast, and her hands, which were folded in her lap, clasped each other more tightly than before.

CHAPTER XXXIII. GABRIELLE'S CHAMPION.

The excitement now was very great. There was not an usher—nay, there was not an errand-boy employed about the court who did not know under what extraordinary circumstances the counsel for the defence was to carry that defence through, and what a stake he had depending on its issue. The fact that Gilbert had risen to speak, was whispered from one to another of those persons, many in number, who were unable to see all that was going on, till in time it even reached the crowd that was gathered outside. The sharp youth who always takes a prominent part in such an assembly, and on such an occasion, and who always has the stupidest of men next to him, caught at the intelligence with avidity.

"He's on his legs," said the sharp youth.

"Who is?" inquired his obtuse neighbour.

"Why, 'er 'usband."

"What's he on his legs for? what's he going to do?"

"Why, to speak for the defence, to be sure," said the sharp youth, who was an habitué of the court, and as well acquainted with all its business and phraseology as a Drury-lane boy with the technicalities of the stage.

"What I can't make out," said the stupid man, "is what call he has to speak about it."

"Why, stupid," retorted the superior mind, "can't you understand he's the counsel for the defence. He's a defending of her."

"Lawyer's wife in trouble," remarked the stupid man. "Well, that *is* a start."

"Ah, I should think it was, too;" and with that the precocious youth abandoned his friend, and pressed forward in search of more intelligence.

Gilbert Penmore, then, rose to address the jury in the midst of a silence which seemed something more than negative. He was deadly pale. For a while things swerved before his eyes, and he spoke at first in a very low key. Perhaps no human being was ever before placed in a position of such severe and intolerable trial.

The counsel for the defence began by making a few preliminary remarks on the peculiar relation in which he stood towards the accused. It was a case in all probability altogether without precedent. He hoped, however, that no one in court would be prejudiced against what he had to say, through taking a false view of this that he was doing. "Could I sit by inactive," he said, "and see another risking the life of the accused, by handling her cause in what might appear to me an incomplete, or defective manner? Could I bear to see a point neglected that might seem to me a point on which things of infinite importance hinged? Could I bear to see an opportunity missed, or a mistake—even a slight one—made? Suppose that usage is against me, as it may be, is that a thing to consider in a case of life and death? If I had been a physician, and had seen the accused assailed by mortal disease, should I not have sought to come between her and its fatal result? If I had been a soldier, should I not, before all other soldiers, have interposed to save her from violence? But above all things, if I must needs apologise for this that I am doing, I will say that there is one reason, above and beyond all others, why I, and I only, should seek to conduct the defence of the accused; and that is, that I, and I alone, *know her to be innocent*. This it is that gives to me, who am versed but little in the arts of pleading, an advantage of incalculable value over any one else, however great his natural ability or his acquired experience; this it is that arms me thrice over for the conflict of to-day, and enables me to contend with a force which is the most irresistible of all force—the consciousness of a just and upright cause."

All eyes were riveted on the young lawyer, but if any had looked to where the prisoner sat, they might have observed that her head was somewhat raised as these words were spoken, and that something like a smile of heavenly radiance illuminated her features.

"I wish to deal with this case," continued Gilbert, "as far as may be as a lawyer, in the strictest sense of the word, and to prove, to the satisfaction of the jury, everything that I advance. I would make no appeal—as, thank Heaven, there is no need—to the mercy and leniency of those who hear me, but simply and entirely to their sense of justice. Let that sense be kept on the alert throughout this defence, from this moment till the last witness that I shall call shall have finished the last word of his evidence. Then neither my client nor I will have anything to fear.

"It has been proved beyond a doubt that the cause of death in the case before the court was poison. This may be admitted at once, and further, that the poison in question was laudanum, or some form of opium, acting on a frame peculiarly predisposed, owing to its organisation, to be influenced by this drug. This being granted, the question which remains to be answered is, By whom was that drug given to the deceased? Three different hypotheses might here be set up as to the person by whom the poison had been administered. There were three different hands by which that poisonous matter might have been conveyed to the lips of the deceased. Indeed, there were but three human beings who *could* have administered the poison. These three persons were, Jane Cantanker, the"—here his voice faltered—"the accused at the bar, and—the deceased lady herself.

"As to the first of these persons," continued Gilbert, collecting himself by a violent effort, "she has remained from the first unaccused, unsuspected. No one seems to have thought it possible that suspicion could attach to her. In-

deed, the truth is, that there is no case against her at all. There would be no motive to induce her to be guilty of such an act. She would have sustained loss instead of gain by her mistress's death. She had no poison in her possession, and everything has gone to prove her intense affection for her mistress, and devotion to her service. Any theory serving to connect her, then, with the poisoning of the deceased may be dismissed at once.

"With regard to the second person to whom it was possible for suspicion to attach in this case, and on whom it has fallen very heavily,—her it will be less easy to clear, though that also shall be done, as I firmly believe, to the satisfaction of all here present.

"And first, with regard to the evidence against the accused, there is not one single fact that has been adduced here this day of which I am prepared for one moment to dispute the accuracy. It is all true. The inferences that have been deduced from these facts alone are false. But I will go further than this, and admit that the circumstantial evidence in this case is damnatory in the extreme, and points with fearful force, at first sight, to the guilt of the accused. And this evidence is, as I have said, true. I am not going to dispute one point of it from beginning to end, and yet I believe that I shall be able to prove beyond a doubt that it is all compatible with the entire innocence of the accused. It is true, then, as the evidence has shown, that differences between her and the deceased lady did arise from time to time during their intercourse, and that the accused was subjected to such provocation as might very well have been supposed to lead to considerable ill feeling on her part towards the deceased. It is not for me to dwell upon the faults of the dead, unless with a view to the preservation of the living; but the fact of such provocation having existed, is beyond a doubt. It is true also that, besides the motive of revenge which such provocation might well have awakened in some natures, there appears at first sight to have been another reason why the accused should desire the death of the late Miss Carrington—the pecuniary gain, namely, which might possibly arise from her leaving this world so suddenly, that, having no warning to prepare her affairs, she would probably die intestate, a circumstance which would be indirectly highly profitable to the accused. It is true that there is thus abundant motive proved for such an act as that which she is charged with committing. Moreover, it is true that the accused went out of the way—and this on the evening of the day on which there had been a serious disagreement between her and deceased—went out of her way to gain an opportunity of conveying to the deceased food and drink in which poison might easily have been concealed, that there was even delay sufficient in the conveyance of such meat and drink to her for whom it was prepared to have allowed of its being qualified in the deadly manner which has been suggested. It is true that after swallowing that food and drink to which the accused had had such free access, the death took place, the circumstances of which this trial is now investigating; and that a certain quantity of the very poison by which the deceased died was found in the possession of the accused. It is true that this poison was concealed out of sight, and that to all appearance an attempt was made by the accused to place the bottle which had held the poison where no human eye was likely to light on it. All this is true, and yet, overwhelming as such an amount and such a force of evidence seems, I shall yet be able to prove to you—yes, prove beyond the shadow of a doubt—that these things do truly and undoubtedly, in this case, co-exist with the most complete innocence, on the part of the accused, in thought, and word, and deed." Here, once more, there was a short silence, of which every one present seemed to take advantage to draw a long breath. The advocate for the defence appeared to gain additional strength now with every word that he uttered, and the hesitation which had marked the commencement of his address was rapidly disappearing. Presently he went on.

"Now as to motive and the ill feeling towards deceased attributed to the accused. We have already seen, by the testimony of the servant, Charlotte Grimes, who lived with her, that she was long-suffering and hard to be provoked, and this I shall be able to corroborate with other evidence, proving that she was never given to quarrelling or ill feeling, and was of an exceptionably kind and affectionate disposition. It must be admitted that the accused was at times provoked beyond all measure, and to such a degree, that we should justly accuse any person of want of heart and feeling who could always remain calm and unirritated under such extreme provocation. I trust that I shall be able to prove to the jury that such irritation as may have been called up by the circumstances under which the accused was placed, was of a very momentary kind, and wholly inconsistent with the deep malignant feeling which the commission of such a crime as that under the consideration of the jury would imply. It is undoubtedly unfortunate that in the accounts of such disagreements as I have spoken of we have heard only the evidence of one powerfully biased in favour of the deceased. Nor can we hear other, the only other person who was ever present on such occasions being precluded from giving evidence as a witness. This is unfortunate, for, clear from all suspicion in this case as Jane Cantanker certainly is, it must yet be owned that as a witness she has shown herself to be under the influence of very bitter feeling towards the accused.

"And now as to the conveying of that meat and drink to the deceased lady—is there no view of that act possible but a suspicious one? Might it not happen that the accused, conscious that an unpleasant scene had taken place that day, and that words had passed between herself and deceased, might wish to explain what she had

said—to show that she had spoken hastily and with no intention to wound? Might she not, under these circumstances, wish to pay some little attention to the deceased, wish for some excuse for going up to her room to exchange some friendly words with her, and say 'Good night'? Is this too much to suppose? Is it too much to suppose, again, that in taking that food up-stairs the accused might turn aside into a room which lay on her road to gain breath, or even to collect herself a little, before entering upon a scene which was likely to prove of a somewhat embarrassing nature?

"Then, again, the possession by the accused of a certain amount of the very poison by which the deceased lady is proved to have died, is this really so damnatory a circumstance as it at first appears? Let it be remembered what that poison was. Let it be remembered that this is no case of poisoning by strychnine, by antimony, by arsenic, or any other of those terrible drugs which only chemists or other professional persons may with propriety be expected to keep by them. Opium in all its forms, let it be remembered, is a medicine, and a medicine capable of exercising the most benign and soothing influences in certain cases of pain and unrest, a medicine used externally as well as internally every day, and one—and to this I would call especial attention—to be found, to some extent, in the medicine-chests of—at a moderate computation—half the families in England. This fact cannot be too much insisted upon. The existence of some poisons in the possession of an unprofessional person would be in itself a suspicious circumstance, but the possession of the poison called laudanum is *not* a suspicious circumstance, for the reasons I have given. As to its being hid away so carefully, in this case, that was simply, as we have seen, owing to an over-exactness in obeying the injunction of the chemist who sold the drug, and who requested that it might be kept in some place of security. It was evidently an excess of caution which led to the very elaborate concealment of the bottle where no one could light upon it by accident, and no uncommon caution either—the very look of that formidable word 'Poison,' as it shows conspicuous on the label of the bottle, being calculated to inspire an extreme fear lest the drug so inscribed should get into careless or dangerous hands. Considered thus, it will surely appear that this act—this hiding away of the poison-bottle which has seemed so suspicious a thing, may be accounted for more easily than might at first sight be supposed possible; and much as those who desire to see an innocent person clear from all suspicion may regret that this concealment of the laudanum was ever attempted, it will surely yet be apparent to all such, after a little reflection, that there is in reality nothing in this act which may not be accounted for by causes consistent in all respects with the innocence of the accused. There are some words which have an alarming sound in themselves, and which spread a sort of panic wherever they appear, and such words as 'Poison' and 'Laudanum' are among them. To most men, and to women more especially, there is something ominous and almost terrible about such words, and though this feeling may possibly be both fanciful and unjustifiable, I would submit that it is none the less a most natural and widely-diffused instinct. But I will go further in connexion with this subject than I have done, and instead of asking whether it is not possible to explain this act, which has been turned to the disadvantage of the accused in such a manner as to prove that it is compatible with a belief in her innocence—I will ask rather, whether it is not almost a proof, indirectly, of her innocence? For is it not almost a certain thing that any one who had been guilty would have destroyed this bottle and obliterated all traces of its existence, instead of keeping by her what might be so likely to prove a dangerous piece of evidence against herself in the event—a most probable one—of its being discovered?

"It has been my desire in what I have hitherto said, to show that all the weight of circumstantial evidence which has been brought forward to support the present charge is yet, strong as I admit that it is, capable of two interpretations, and therefore it is that I have gone thus into the particulars of the case against the accused. And indeed it must be that this evidence is susceptible of two interpretations. It must be that the innocence of the accused is reconcilable with the facts which have been laid before the court; for though it is true that all things took place as has been shown this day, it is equally true that she who is accused of this crime DID NOT COMMIT IT, nor entertain the very thought of it in her heart. But I need dwell no longer on this theme; indeed, it would be waste of time to do so, when I have proof to offer the jury—proof of the strongest and most irrefragable kind—that the poison by which Diana Carrington died, was administered by another hand than that of the accused. By whom, then, was it administered? is the next question. My answer is ready.

"I assert, without a moment's hesitation, that the poison by which the deceased lady met her death, was taken by herself, of her own free will, and that, moreover, without any thought that what she did might have a fatal result, or any intention of self-destruction."

Gilbert paused for a moment at this point, and a deep breath of something almost like relief seemed to come simultaneously from the whole assembly of human beings gathered together in court that day. The appearance and bearing of the accused had told much in her favour with all present, and any announcement which promised to dissipate the dreadful cloud which hung over her was very welcome. The barristers whispered together, and even the judicial calmness of the bench did not seem altogether proof against the natural curiosity which the last words of the counsel for the defence were calculated to awaken.

He went on: "Gentlemen of the jury, what I have just stated is no mere assertion. I have evidence to give that shall bear out every word I have said. I shall shortly call before you for examination a witness whom the facts of this case have only just reached, and who has now only heard of it, to use the common phrase, by accident. At the eleventh hour this witness has come forward in time to save a life which, perhaps, without his testimony, might have been sacrificed. He has come forward to testify that he has for some time past been in the habit of supplying the deceased lady with laudanum; that he did so under the impression that she required it mainly for external use, and that she was liable to suffering which made its use necessary to her. She had this poison from him for the last time on the day before that on which she expired. The fact that he was ignorant of her name, and the strange life and habits of this person, something of which, no doubt, will come out under examination, have been the causes which have led to his being thus long in coming forward with evidence of such extreme importance, just as it is certain that the fact of his not having been visited by the agents of the police when investigating the case, is to be attributed to the circumstance that he is not, strictly speaking, a chemist, but a herbalist and seedsman, while the shop which he keeps is not a chemist's shop, but such an one as is ordinarily kept by the members of the trade to which he belongs. The herbalist's shop has been passed by, and the herbalist himself overlooked, in the course of those inquiries to which the case now before the jury has given rise; and so it has happened that the person who, of all others, was alone able to clear up this mystery, has remained, till the very eleventh hour, altogether ignorant of how much depended upon evidence which he alone could give. For it is most certain that this man has till quite recently known nothing of the case which the court is now investigating, and that but for the merest accident, as I have said, his evidence, of such matchless importance as it is, might yet never have been brought to light. As it is, however, and owing, as we phrase it, to a rare and most happy chance, which all men who love justice will hail joyfully, this man is here to give evidence this day—here to settle a question which, without his testimony, might have remained, at best, doubtful in men's eyes, or which at worst might have been wrongly and falsely decided, leaving in one case a slur upon a name which should be wholly pure and untarnished, and in the other condemning to a shameful death a creature as innocent of the horrible deed attributed to her as the angels are that have watched over her in her hour of danger. And gentlemen of the jury," cried Gilbert in conclusion, "one thing let me at least entreat of you. When this man—this witness—shall have spoken, and when you shall have heard all that he has to say, be swift in what you have to do, and let your work be accomplished quickly. His evidence, I fondly hope and believe, is conclusive in its nature, and will leave you with little inclination to doubt or hesitate. Have great consideration, then, for one who has already suffered, as I devoutly trust that not one of you will ever suffer, who, born and bred in a position removed, one would have thought, from the bare possibility of such an experience as this, has yet had to pass through an ordeal which would shake the roughest and most hardened nature. Be considerate of what she must still endure while your deliberations last, and end them, in Heaven's name, as quickly as may consist with the fulfilment of the sacred duty which you have pledged yourselves to perform this day."

Gilbert sat down, and again was heard that murmur—that deep-drawn breath which seemed to be released after being held too long. It was not applause. It was nothing that could be checked or repressed; but it spoke eloquently of profoundest interest in what was passing, and of cordial approbation of what the speaker had said. As for Gilbert himself, he felt like one who was living in some strange dream. After the first minute or two, he had become insensible to what was going on around him. All nervousness and diffidence had left him. He saw but indistinctly the crowd which he was addressing. He spoke on almost mechanically—spoke because he *must*, with no hesitation or doubt as to what he should say. Such conditions of feeling as this are not without precedent. In these supreme moments men have fulfilled their parts, and known little or nothing of what they have been doing. It is so in battle, when, in the wild excitement of a charge, the soldier does not know that he is wounded. It is so with some intelf lectual tasks which men have performed, as it were, in a trance, half conscious only of what they did, yet doing it strangely well, and hardly recognising, when they came to themselves, the work of their own minds.

The lawyers, too, whispered together over this speech for the defence. Mr. Craft was there in court and some of his friends. They were disposed to take a different view of Gilbert's fitness for the profession of advocate to that which they had expressed with so much frankness in Mr. Lethwaite's chambers. One thing that astonished them especially, was that Gilbert's accent had so little, if indeed at all, impaired the effect of his speech. It had hardly been noticed. Much of it had worn off as the young barrister warmed to his work. What remained really mattered not. There are people, who speak with a certain difficulty, who seem to impress what they have to say upon you more strongly than others, who have the gift of an easy flow of words. You feel that men belonging to the first of these classes are never betrayed into saying things because their tongues have run away with them; while with regard to those who come under the second classification, you are not so sure. There was that in Gilbert Penmore's delivery which made his listeners wait

very eagerly for the words that were coming, and which were got at sometimes with some little difficulty.

And now the moment had arrived when the examination of the witnesses for the defence must begin. These were fewer in number than those called for the prosecution, and here, as in the case for the prosecution, there was one of importance beyond all others. What Jane Cantanker had done for the prosecution, Cornelius Vampi must do for the defence, and more. Upon his evidence everything now hinged.

A MOST DESIRABLE FAMILY MANSION.

Monsieur Godin-Lemaire is the proprietor and manager of an iron-foundry at Guise, near St. Quentin. He is great for his patent mantelpieces of enamelled iron imitating marble, great for his kitchen-ranges, but greater for the benevolent ingenuity that he has shown in providing hearth and home for his seven hundred workmen, and their wives and children. Every invention has a name. The name of M. Godin's Workman's Home is the Familistère. It is the familistery of Guise, or its family mansion; but in English we may as well call it the Workman's Home. Four years ago this Home was established, and its fame is now beginning to reach Paris and London. To Paris it has been described in a pamphlet called A Study, by A. Oyon. For London, it has been described by Signor Tito Pagliardini in the Social Science Review, and Signor Pagliardini's article has been reprinted for diffusion as a pamphlet, entitled A Visit to the Familistery, and published by Mr. G. A. Hutchinson, of Whitefriars-street.

The Workman's Home, founded by M. Godin, consists of two lofty and handsome buildings at one end of the principal street of Guise. A third building is to be added to these. They are not bare and repulsive of aspect, but good specimens of decorative architecture in red brick, with violet edgings, ornamented cornice, pilasters, entablatures, dressings to all the doors and windows. Why should there not be a little taste bestowed upon the construction of a Workman's Home: a little suggestion of the refining home influence, in its very aspect?

The two buildings already erected, form the back and right side of a square; the third building, yet to come, will complete the left side; and two annexes will then complete the square, and give a facility of covered communication between all the buildings. This Family Mansion stands in about fifteen acres of lawn, grove, and garden, on a peninsula formed by the Oise, where a bridge over the river leads to M. Godin's own house on the other side.

Now, if we take one of the blocks of buildings in M. Godin's Workman's Home, and, without describing its arrangements too minutely, look at its principle of construction, we find that it is four stories high, and so built as to enclose an open square. It has, therefore, abundant openings to light and air. Thick party walls limit the danger of fire, and the walls everywhere are thick enough to secure privacy to every little home within the building. Light balconies, reached by broad and easy staircases, projecting from each story, surround the inner court, and form the way home for the workmen and their families. Each inhabitant goes straight, by way of the balcony, to his own door; the court below is the safe playground of the children, upon whom each of the mothers can look down from the balcony at any time. This court, too, is a great playground, serviceable in all weathers, where there need be little damage to the clothes that the poor parents take so much pains to keep tidy, for its ground is of beaten polished cement, and it is covered in by an immense skylight that rises above the roofs. On grand occasions, as on the festival of the blacksmiths' saint, St. Eloi, or a distribution of prizes, the great playground is transformed into a ball-room, with a band of eighty performers: the band of the Philharmonic Society of this Familistery.

Every set of rooms has a cellar as well as a granary, but there are also underground drains for drying the ground, as well as the amplest provision of the drainage, too commonly wanting in homes of the poor. And, beyond all this, there is a great crypt under the court, connected with a system of free ventilation by continual change of air in the sheltered playground, as well as throughout the buildings. In the hot season the court is watered. The water, raised by steam into great reservoirs at the top of the building, is made also to supply fountains that play on each landing; and the supply of water is in each workman's home so ample, that its consumption by the inmates averages rather more than five gallons a head. There are hot and cold baths, of which gratuitous use is allowed to invalids and children. In fact, the wise founder of these homes has known how, without rules of any sort, to give what is described as "a leading passion" for cleanliness to all who occupy them. The dust-holes are emptied daily; utmost attention is paid to drainage and ventilation, the closets are cleaned three times a day by the women of the establishment, who are employed in the general fight against dirt in the court and in the balconies, and on the stairs, and in the rooms of single men. The married women vie with one another in maintaining complete cleanliness within the threshold of their outer doors.

To the workman's wife, as to the workman, time is money, and she is spared all loss of time in running about the town for supply of domestic wants. On the ground floor of the Home, are retail shops, under the direction of a manager. There, may be bought vegetables, meat, bacon, rabbits, wood and coal, groceries and chandleries; there, is a dairy; there, is a wine, beer, and cider shop; there, may be bought necessary draperies, shoes, needles and threads, all at wholesale price, with less than a re-

tailer's per-centage added, to pay part of the costs of the establishment. All the profit is returned to the good of the Home community, and the labour required goes also to the general good: fit persons among the wives and daughters of the resident workmen being employed in selling, book-keeping, dress and shirt-making, washing, as well as in any other service required. The washing is done in winter, in a laundry and drying-room; in summer, at the lavatory by the river; so no damp unwholesome vapours infect the air of the Home. The housewife in this Workman's Home may save her fuel in summer, or her time in winter, by buying the meals of her household ready cooked at the refreshment-room and restaurant, also attached to the building; or a family may adjourn thither to take any meal. The single man in furnished lodgings, usually gets all his meals at the restaurant, where they cost him from sevenpence-halfpenny to tenpence a day. His furnished room, with linen, bedmaking, sweeping, &c., costs him from six-and-eightpence to eight-and-fourpence a month: generally, less than two shillings a week. There is a dormitory, in which a separate bed can be had for a penny a day. For unfurnished lodging in this nest of homes, the charge is at the rate of three-and-ninepence a month for each room. A home of five rooms and a kitchen, with numerous cupboards and conveniences, costs, free of all taxes and repairs, eighteen pounds a year. It is such a home as, on a third floor in Paris, would be considered cheap at one hundred and twenty pounds a year.

We may be very sure that a manufacturer who has got so far as this, in his notion of a duty to his workpeople, understands that amusement is a necessary aid to health, comfort, and the proper use of life. There belong to the building, therefore, its own place of recreation, with reading and news-room, provided also with chess, draughts, dominoes, and so forth, and well lighted and warmed; a billiard-room; and a refreshment-room. There is also a great practising-room on the ground floor for the Philharmonic Society, whose band delights the children in the court, and the women as they sit at work in the galleries. This Philharmonic Society of the Familistery is furnished by M. Godin with a professional leader, to secure good training, and the instruments belong to the establishment. But it is a self-governing body, freely admitting amateurs from the town, and enrolling also M. Godin's son among its sociable members. A fête at the Familistery, with dancing on the smooth pavement of the lighted and decorated court, and this band of eighty in its glory, is a brilliant sight, and all the three galleries around the court are then thronged with the people of Guise, who come to look on.

The workmen of this Home form themselves into a benefit club for medical attendance and sick pay. However clean the bill of health, their doctor comes to the gate every day, to ask whether there be any one who wants his services. He is not in much request, for even epidemics in the town pass by the Familistery, and thus far the infant mortality has been eight per cent below the average.

For the infant in this Home, from birth to two years old, there is—of course within the walls, near every mother at her work, and freely accessible to her at any moment—a well-appointed nursery, called, from poupon, a chubby-faced baby, the Pouponnat. In it are provided elegant iron cradles, furnished with curtains and linen, constantly renewed; baby-food of all sorts is prepared and warmed in an adjoining room; and baby-linen, food, cradle, medical attendance, all, are the free right of the mothers in the Home, who may take their infants in and out as they will, suckle them at home or in the Pouponnat, have them to sleep, at will, at home or in this nursery, where day and night the little ones are carefully tended by wives and daughters of workmen who have taken on themselves that charge. In this nursery a gallery is provided, in which little ones may sit, pull themselves up by a bar, practise themselves in standing, and tumble without hurt. Coloured balls and toys are provided, and there is much baby-prattle, with but little screaming, to be heard.

At two years old, when these little people can walk alone, there is an infant school ready to take charge of them: that school being called, from the Italian word for a very young child, the Bambinat. Here, they are small students until the age of six: being, of course, fed and clothed by their parents. They learn the alphabet to sounds of music, sing their multiplication-table, learn arithmetic with mechanical help, some of the simpler facts of life by help of bright pictures, and copy outline drawings on their slates. They march and sing and use their limbs freely: the Bambinat being a sort of cross between the Kindergarten and the English Infant School.

At six years old, the children of the Familistery pass from the Bambinat to the School, where they are arranged in four classes, according to attainment. But in the teaching of elder as of younger children, M. Godin rightly accounts it most conducive to good manners and good morals, to teach boys and girls together. Boys sit on one side of the room, girls on the other. M. Godin's right idea is that the young girl of sixteen or eighteen is safest in the constant, open, unmysterious companionship with youth of the other sex; that such intercourse leads to a sense of cousinship and an intimate knowledge of character, which gives, both to a young man and to a young woman, the best chance of marrying a suitable companion.

The boys and girls in the School write from dictation into copy-books with neatness, and with early facility in spelling. All the lessons are unusually well learnt; in part because of the prevalent good spirit; in part because of the honour paid to individual exertion. The first place in a class is given every week, not to the pupil who is naturally quickest, but to the pupil who has taken most pains to do well: marks being

given as rewards of assiduity. In the order of their places—as nearly as may be discovered, of their worth as patient little scholars—the children march in procession to School every morning, under the eyes of their parents. This also is a stimulus to exertion. Exertion, within the power of all, whatever the natural abilities, is the one thing rewarded. Punishments there are absolutely none, except exclusions from reward. Thus, only the children who have given no cause for complaint are taken on Thursday afternoons into the private flower and fruit garden, where the fruits in season are gathered and given to the children who go in. It is a distressing thing to be shut out; but it is the wholesome missing of an extra pleasure that has not been earned. Another reward only attainable by good conduct, and much valued by the children, is permission to spend part of Sunday in the apartment of Mademoiselle Marie, a clever and highly educated young relative of M. Godin's, who superintends generally the Pouponnat, the Bambinat, and the schools. In her room, are toys of all sorts, and there is a bright welcome for those children by whom it has been earned. A young professor from Paris manages the teaching in the higher schools; a workman's wife superintends the infant school; and these all, with the nurses in the Pouponnat, give themselves heart and soul to the enjoyment of the kindly work of true education, which removes oppressive terrors, multiplies encouragements and wholesome influences about the happy child, gives to each one a sound knowledge of the essentials of instruction, including practice for the girls in cookery and household work, and fits them to be happy heads of future families, and faithful workers in the foundry that has tempered their characters and cast them in the best of moulds.

The schooling of all the children of the workpeople who occupy M. Godin's most desirable Family Mansion is not said to be given them. Payment is understood to be included in the rent. Care is taken to encourage a right sense of self-dependence, and in all the details of this desirable Family Mansion, the liberty of every tenant is respected. Only nobody is quite free to suffer his child to go untaught, and a penny a day is charged for every child in the Familistery that is not sent to school. Beyond this, there are no rules and regulations, and these Homes have never yet yielded a case for police interference, or even for the interference of M. Godin or his representative. M. Godin's workmen are not at all bound to live in the Familistery. Each takes a month's lease of his lodging, and may leave it if he do not like it. He need not buy at the shops provided for his use on the ground floor, if he should think he can do better, or if he should prefer to go into the town. M. Godin merely offers his men the most wholesome form of home he can conceive. They may use it or not use it, or use only as much of it as suits their own convenience. The place is not an almshouse. Liberal as all its arrangements are—bountiful in their regard for every want of life—the great fact remains behind that the Familistery is an investment which—including cost of the education given to the young—*pays six per cent.* Its motive was of the noblest, and its success proves its plan to be of the wisest; for not only is it necessary to the wide extension of any good system like this that it should make no demand on human inclinations for self-sacrifice which, as a rule, are weak; but it is necessary that every workman using such a Home should know that he does actually pay for it and live in it without a sacrifice of independence. One important element in the success of M. Godin's scheme is the system of little shops on the ground floor. On first coming, workmen's wives usually keep house in their old way, and hold to their old manner of marketing; but they soon find that they get better and cheaper goods close to their doors, while the profit that is taken on them covers a good many of the general expenses of the place. All dealing at the shops of the Familistery must be for ready money, or by cheques on the next payment of wages (payment being fortnightly), and the amount of any such cheques is deducted at the time of payment. Thus the people in the Familistery are not bound to it, as they are often bound to retail shops, by a chain of debt. Between master and men there is no tie but that of mutual regard and human fellowship, which must be strong indeed, when on the master's side there is so thoughtful a sense of it as M. Godin has shown. His Workmen's Homes are so well appreciated, that their rooms fill as fast as they are ready, and two hundred workmen and their families are even now waiting to come in as soon as the progress of the building will enable them to do so.

THE TRUE GOLDEN AGE.

Childhood's the only golden age;
Then had I many a fairy vassal,
Then even the miser who lived on the hill
Was Giant Despair, of Doubting Castle.

Everything my fancy changed
To the wonderful dreams of nursery-lore,
And I walk'd in the fir-tree wood in fear
Of meeting the Giant Blunderbore.

I dreaded the cat with the brassy eyes
Glaring with phosphorescent lights;
For I knew on such steeds the witches ride;
Chasing the moon on the summer nights.

And well I knew that the fern-leaves hid
Sleeping fairies and elves by dozens,
And mushrooms sprang wherever there danced
Titania's chiefs or Oberon's cousins.

The sunset brought me faces grim,
Glaring out from the fiery doors;
And often I saw in the moonlit clouds
Angels who paced the starry floors.

Now, the rainbow itself seems black;
The only giant I meet, is Care;
The wolf is growling outside the door,
And the bailiff's step I hear on the stair.

Childhood's the only golden age;
Then had I many a fairy vassal,
Then even the miser who lived on the hill
Was Giant Despair, of Doubting Castle.

A RECENT LOUNGE IN DUBLIN.

Fine days, and finer nights too, these for the newsmen—hoarse with shrieking through the streets of Dublin that there are later and yet later editions. For the old custom still obtains there of such stentorian heralds scouring every street and square at nightfall, and of chanting "the great news" obstreperously, as the old watchmen did the hour. Heads of houses—a little languid after dinner, and after the good claret or Rhenish—catch the sound of this declamation with a "God bless me, there must be some news!" and Jeames is presently on the steps, hailing the noisy vendor.

Fine times, too, for the newspaper offices, with enormous placards hung outside, and great crowds gathered, reading over each other's heads, and a band of vendors shouting against one another, and competing for every buyer. Fine times, too—but not so agreeable—for the machinery inside, thundering and clattering round without a moment's rest, and rolling out sheet after sheet, as if they were enormous conjurors, drawing yards and yards of white ribbon from their mouths. The air seems so charged with valuable intelligence, with the contending cries of "The J'dge's charge! *The* great and phowherful *ad*dheress of Counshillor Butt!" and "the Defince, and findin' of the Djury!" Thus, by a little careful attention, and the operation known as "putting this and that together," it seems that one could save all outlay, and be thus gratuitously supplied with a full oral report of the entire proceedings.

In short, all this shouting and excitement refers to the men of the hour, or perhaps of the moment—the would-be resuscitators of the ancient militia of Ireland, of whom, in a recent number of this Journal, was given a short account.* So the natives, enrolled by the great Finn, who, it will be remembered, was of the family of Con of the hundred battles, were denominated. The attempts to revive these useful fencibles has been most disastrous for those who supposed that there was a craving for such an organisation. The ground has either been preoccupied by the regular force called out for their twenty-one days' training, or else there is a dearth of the marvellously gifted men who could walk over rotten branches without a sound, or who could poise heavy rocks in their hands to win brides; and perhaps most of all was wanting a man of the calibre of Finn himself. One endowed with a fiftieth part of the qualifications of that great chief, as set out in panegyrical poems of enormous length, would have been invaluable at such a crisis.

The gentlemen who would restore the arrangement of the old Irish militia, have, as all the world knows, been unfortunate in their efforts. We have seen how their office was rudely burst into, sacked, and their archives, muster-rolls, &c., carried away. Since then, the prosy operation of judicial retribution has been applied, and the project of founding a grand Irish militia thrown back, hopelessly, for many years. It is hard to import even a little romance into matters of this sort as adventured in our own kingdom. The skies—say even the fogs—are against us. The rare appearance of the soldiery, the sober livery of the officers of the law, the practical manufacturing air of the whole, makes it desperate up-hill work to lift any attempt into the character of "a rising." In Italy they have the bright skies, the Masaniello background, the Italian opera scenery, and the red shirts. The original Finnians wore saffron shirts; but this is scarcely a fast colour. In this matter of romance, the militia project had been all but shipwrecked, but for a recent providential escape effected under circumstances of some skill and daring.

The stranger or tourist who now visits Dublin and walks through its spacious and handsome modern quarter, Sackville-street, broadest of Broadways, where now trees are being planted (and there are people alive who remember two rows of noble chesnut-trees, known as the Mall, where "fashionables" of that day used to alight from their coaches and walk), the squares Merrion and Fitzwilliam, and the Greater Green, where gentlemen were then shooting snipe—strangers would not suspect that the select and desirable quarter which "persons of quality" affected, was then far off, down in the meaner slums, the narrow lanes, and fœtid alleys, which spread out near the Four Courts. Here used to be the theatres and the assembly-rooms, and the houses of chief justices and chancellors, now become tenements almost in a state of leprosy, and swarming with flocks of lodgers. Here, that Tate Wilkinson, the actor, first landed some hundred and twenty years ago, was bewildered by the block of rattling coaches and the gorgeous dresses of the ladies and the running footmen carrying flambeaux, and thought he had never seen such a sight. Here, in a mean slum by the river, marked by a broken arch, was the "Smock Alley Theatre," where Garrick played to such crowded and heated audiences, that an epidemic for which he was said to be thus accountable, was named after him. Here it was that on a dark night, when Lord Kilwarden, the chief justice, was going home in his coach to a fine house in another mean lane, a rebellion broke out on the spot, and he was dragged from his coach and murdered. Here, too, is the Castle of Dublin, where are the guard mountings, and the levees, and the drawing-rooms *by night*, and the balls, and the St. Patrick's night ball, to some twelve hundred people, all in court dresses, where the feathers, and the lappets, and the trains, and the toupees, and the white stockings and ruffles, all fly round in a mêlée to the Guards' Valse. And here, too, crossing Essex Bridge, and striking off in another unsavoury direction, we

* See page 300 of the present volume.

come to GREEN-STREET, where there is a rude frowning old-fashioned Newgate—exact twin sister to London Newgate—and where there are a crowd, and lights, and countless police.

It is about seven o'clock in the evening. I stop a moment, and the one word that is in most mouths and comes uppermost in each conversation—"Faynian"—would explain the whole. The restorers of the old Irish militia are being tried within. A weary day is over. The newsboys are hoarse with proclamation of the work done; and here are the black vans come to take away the prisoners to their prison. I am just in time.

The procession is worth seeing. It has the air of nothing seen before; but most of all resembling a grotesque funeral. His was surely a mortuary mind—the coachmaker's—who devised the prison van, with the view, no doubt, that even as he travelled the prisoner might not lose the feeling that he was still in jail. It is like a nightmare, to see two enormous black vans driven by men in black, and with black conductors at the door, galloping at full speed, with hussars in front, behind, and on every side—with funereal police in long dark cloaks riding behind, and a train of outside cars "bowling" along, each crowded with policemen. Which would seem to countenance the theory that everything in Ireland is constructed with an administrative view; for these vehicles would appear to have come into being with exactly this object—to be sat on by policemen in charge of a criminal, who can go in front in his own proper carriage, while his guardians can follow in easy attitudes, with their eyes well on him, so that they can jump off all at once, and at a second's notice, on the least symptom of danger. The whole is a strange and wild procession. It is like an Irish legend; and as the cavalcade sweeps by through dangerous districts, where the inhabitants are collected to see the show, and swarm down from the attics of the chief justice and chancellors of a hundred years ago—wild men and women, looking still wilder under the flaring gas, fresh from steaming and unhealthy pursuits; and as the vans reel round the corners there rise cheers and cries, and stones begin to fly, falling on the exposed police, who thus discover that their cars, however excellent as ottomans, have still disadvantages.

On some of these days when there is a luckless conspirator on his trial, I enter the court—though indeed this is a matter of difficulty, for the whole place is encumbered with enormous policemen, all six feet high and bearded, looking like heavy dragoons in disguise; and these persons so swarm at the gates and passages, at the corners, and on the steps, that the eye seems to be affected for a long time afterwards, and can see nothing but dark blue patches and white spectral numbering.

And here, now, is the court itself, which looks like a large amphitheatre, with a dark unpleasant little well in the centre that seems very deep, and from which diligent police draw prisoners just as they might come and draw water. An unhappy conspirator has been brought to the surface—swart, Italian-looking, with plenty of black hair well tossed back. Two judges in scarlet—a refreshing bit of colour in all that gloom—and the "counshillors" down in a little cockpit of theirs, where indeed many a "main" is fought, and fought well; where they flutter their briefs like feathers at each other, and drive cruel and sarcastic spurs into each other's brains, and peck each other soundly, and finally give a crow of victory when the battle is over and the victory won. And here again the police element is overpowering, overflowing from galleries to dock, from dock to cockpit, from cockpit to jury-box. In the gallery there is certainly a well-dressed crowd of loyal citizens, and countrymen and agriculturists. But as the agriculturists all wear heavy moustaches and beards, and as the clothes of the agriculturists have a new and "stagey" air—being clearly "properties" from the police green-room—it is not uncharitable to suppose that these simple rustics and "virtuous peasants" (for there *is* a red waistcoat or two) are authorised masqueraders. Everything seems tinctured with police. Even the judges come down to court with mounted policemen cantering about their carriages, and go home, when the day is done, attended by the same secure and cheerful company.

In Irish political trials there is a regular performer, who always comes on and lends a specially dramatic interest to the whole. This is the Informer, as he is known to the crowd: the Approver, as he is more courteously known to the law. It is dramatic to see this actor's entrance; his furtive glance at the galleries, as if there were enemies there, ready to spring on him; his timorous answers to the almost contemptuous questioning of the Crown lawyers, who seem anxious to have done with the "dirty work;" his gradual gathering of confidence as he feels safe; his cowering look as the prisoners' counsel advance to grapple with him; his fawning explanations and self-justification; his falling back on brazen impudence and bravado as he is obliged to confess some fresh piece of treachery; his half-savage and defiant confession as he is brought to bay and the truth wrung from him; and the bitter scowl of secret rage at the skilful counsel who has forced him to make a degrading picture of himself. It were almost to be wished that this mode of proving guilt were not known to our law; though it must be admitted that it is always introduced with reluctance, and thrown in as a make-weight; and that on this occasion all parties concerned seemed to rest very little on the "Informer's" assistance.

More dramatic, too, as the night of the long weary day draws on, and the lamps are lighted; when the unwearied judges still take their notes with unslackening assiduity, and the counsel—unwearied, too, in voice, wit, wisdom, energy, and vigilance—declaim and debate as freshly and as vigorously as in the morning: though the Conspirator, up to his middle in his cold well, is long weary in body, and yet more weary and heart-sick in mind, and perhaps wishes over and over again

that the hopless struggle would end once for all, and that he might sink down to the very bottom of the dark waters of his well. Surely if to the man who saves another's life by defence with a strong arm and sword, peculiar recognition is due, much honour is due to the lawyer fighting for his charge hour by hour, inch by inch—never faltering—struggling against hopelessness of success, and to the very end making desperate battle. And there is a skill and artful method lurking under all the vain—as it would seem—skirmishing, that attends on State prosecutions; for with this fencing about, "challenging," "panels," "pleas in abatement," and the like, succeeding one another, it might appear, with a foolish and profitless succession—the artful counsel may fetch the Crown advocates some little prick or puncture through their armour which at the moment may not be perceived—or if perceived and submitted to the Physician presiding, may be dismissed as "nothing"—but which, when submitted after the verdict to the Great College of Judicial Physicians, may be found to be a palpable hit and fatal stab to the indictment.

Finally, the work is done. The conspirator has his little dramatic finish, his bit of heroism, before sinking down. That speaking of the speech and protest against sentence being passed, is always a little comfort, which it would be hard to grudge any prisoner; and our conspirator does his part with good effect. Then comes the Sentence. Down is he drawn to the very bottom of the waters of the well, never to reappear. The show is over—the play is played out—the finery and tinsel of "risings," "uniforms," "pikes," "tyranny," and what not, fade and crumble into powder. Now come the grim prison walls where the soldiers are waiting, and the grey convict clothing.

It is curious to be in a city of so many old departed glories, though they now seem a little theatrical. Think of the Parliament, a House of Lords and Commons, voting money and supplies, and with a series of Lords' and Commons' journals, sumptuous folios—"huge armfuls," Elia would say—that would delight a bibliomaniac. Think of the huge coffee-house, or gaming club-house—"Daly's"—next door, now partitioned into insurance offices—where estates were lost and won; where strange duels were "arranged;" whither one Honourable Member, having told another Honourable Member "that he had the heart of a toad," and was, besides, "the auctioneer of his country," deriving his remoter ancestry from "the mixed throng that with Romulus and Remus were the early founders of Rome," adjourned promptly, to settle a meeting by the agency of "friends." Every corner of it has some historic memory. Swift—Grattan—Trinity; even that College-green where the equestrian William sits on a bronze horse (with a bent fore-leg, which, on measurement, is found to be nearly a foot longer than the other three—but this steed is of English breed), and where, with a boastful inscription, he preaches a Glorious and Pious Memory. Round this statue have been endless battles—"Town and Gown" riots—Gown walking in reverent procession round the Deliverer, and Town inflamed to fury by the homage. At last one night people were awakened by an explosion, and in the morning the Deliverer's saddle was found empty. He had been unhorsed. The steed was there, riderless. The head of the Deliverer had been blown to a field more than a mile away; his limbs were recovered in various portions of the city. The whole were carefully collected and put together, and the Deliverer remounted. Will it be credited, that down to fourteen years ago, it was the custom, on the arrival of a new lord-lieutenant, for a regiment to be formed in square round this contested statue, and, at a given signal, fire three volleys in honour of the Glorious and Pious Memory?

About this old city are many pleasant walks, by sea, and through green lanes, which have a pleasant variety. By sea, for instance, taking that long pier, which makes one side of the port, and was considered a stupendous engineering work in its day, constructed by the old Irish parliament, and which stretches some miles out. You can get as fine a bath of sea-air there, as man could desire. It is only a few feet above the water, has no parapet, so that with a full tide, and on a breezy day, you seem to be walking through the sea, and it becomes a business of peril to "dodge" the breakers. Near the end, bulges out that old fort called so oddly the Pigeon House—all on the old model, with the old uneffective defences and ancient carronades, and where was the old Custom Houses in the days of the Irish parliament, where the packets from Parkgate arrived. A very pleasant walk indeed, and from this pier you look out on the great bay, so often likened to that of Naples, and the Hill of Howth opposite, and Ireland's Eye where the dramatic Kirwan murder was done, and to the Kingstown harbour, which glitters afar off, out of which the packets are always steaming back and forwards.

Of a Sunday, only a few days back, I walked out in this direction; and it had the charm of being a lonely and solitary walk. The previous night had been an angry one, and the waves were heavy and sullen, and the breeze was sharp and strong, and far off the "white horses" were riding about furiously. The long pier did not seem encouraging. But, pushing on to get a nearer view, I found the old Pigeon House altogether metamorphosed. It was like a pantomime trick. Some military harlequin had come with his wand and touched the place. There were stockades and outposts. The old guns had been furbished up, and their old open jaws grinned down the road with an air of menace. The battlements glittered with soldiers, and the drawbridge was up. The long pier was in a state of siege, and all access hopelessly cut off. This abridgment of a favourite walk, I set down to the account of the Ogre, Fenianism.

Turning back, I found, half way down the unabridged portion of the pier, a little "slip,"

where boats come up, and land and take off passengers; persons with a lively interest in oysters affect this spot a good deal. But I found the oyster interest shaken to its centre on this occasion by the signs of the times, and mysteriously discussing a remarkable embarkation supposed to have taken place the night before. At this very point, and on this very morning, the arch-Fenian was said to have embarked in an open fishing-boat, and to have been pulled by strong fishing arms out to a Liverpool yacht lying far off in the bay. This was importing the romance of *the sea* into the business; it brought on the old dramatic flavour of old days, when gentlemen, with cloaks over their French uniforms, "hung about" the coast, and were "taken off" by suspicious-looking luggers. The seafaring men—of a curious boat-building, shell-fish sort of half dock, half village, close by, and called Ringsend—think it must have been a tough job on such a night for an open boat, but incline to the belief that it could be done. That it was done is probable enough, if one may trust one-half of the flying rumours, or the passenger who was walking the deck of the mail-packet that morning at about three o'clock, and saw a yacht, with every "stitch" of canvas spread, flying before the gale; or that villa-proprietor on the coast, who, looking from his window at about the same hour, saw the yacht putting out to sea.

Thus disappointed in a sea-walk, I come round inland, and make for the Circular-road. Here, after diligent walking, I come to what is called, after a good pattern, The Bridewell: one of the few significant and racy old words left. Here, again, is the crowd looking and studying this blank pile with extraordinary interest—not at the inscription cut in stone over the door, with which they are familiar enough—"CEASE TO DO EVIL, LEARN TO DO WELL!"—but discussing the flight of the arch-conspirator with extraordinary satisfaction. This is a Bridewell of the old theatrical pattern, with iron doors, and tortuous passages, and an immense quantity of keys and locking up, and not constructed on the modern model, so fatally simple, and so hopelessly impracticable in matters of escape.

If I want information about this place of duresse, I can surely have it from a pro-Fenian journal, sold in large quantities, and written up to a fine dramatic pitch of exaltation suited to the occasion. Behold the tempting bill of fare, "displayed" after the American fashion in its columns.

ESCAPE OF STEPHENS!

RELEASED BY CONFEDERATES ON THE PRISON STAFF!

FALSE KEYS!

ALL DOORS OPEN, OPENED FOR HIM, AND HE ESCAPES WITH EASE!

CONSUMMATE ABILITY OF THE PLOT!

TREMENDOUS EXCITEMENT IN THE CITY!

ALARM AND DISMAY OF THE GOVERNMENT!

Goodly promise! The details are broken into chapters, headed "THE FIRST TIDINGS IN THE CITY." "THE ESCAPE!" "HOW THE ESCAPE WAS DISCOVERED." "THE VAIN PURSUIT!" "PANIC RUMOURS!" No wonder that "the government and its friends feel like men standing above a deadly mine," and that "the sympathisers with Fenianism, irrepressible in their exultation, went about with *fired eye* and flushed face *clutching each other's hands*." Not unnaturally, "the members of the police force—*the detective force especially*—looked like men crushed, defeated, humiliated." This same journal had promised a Portrait of the "Escaped;" but, under circumstances of delicacy—"*events which have transpired* since our first edition went to press"—the journal is compelled to withhold the portrait, as being possibly unfair to the interests of the gentleman now at large. But, to make up for the disappointment, "A VIEW OF THE SCENE OF THE ESCAPE, drawn for this journal by our special artist," was to be ready with the next impression. Purchasing the "next impression," I confess to fresh disappointment in finding a mere bald "ground-plan" of the Bridewell put forward "as the scene of the escape, drawn by our special artist."

But another journal is not inclined to allow a monopoly of sensation to a rival, and has "headings" also of this pattern: "THE ESCAPE." "WHAT IT WAS THE MORNING AFTER." "MORALISING ABOUT IT." "HOW WAS IT DONE?" "WHERE SUSPICION POINTS." "AVOIDING FELON-SETTING." "HOW STEPHENS TOOK IT." "WHAT RUMOUR SAYS." "THE HOUR OF THE DEED!"

The same journal has an artist taking "pen-and-pencil notes." These notes are broken up, according to the proper model, to give effect. As a little problem, the reader may set himself to devise how he would describe the scene "AROUND THE COURT!—Thus, in Capel-street the tide of the city's human ocean seems to set with constant flow, and through these narrow approaches to the court, *that of Little Britain-street, and that by which Green-street is reached from North King-street, it is choked and impeded with its density.* It is with difficulty *that crowd of sullen men is threaded*," &c.

The next scene is "IN THE COURT.—How empty that gallery, those side seats, *that passage on either side.*" The sketcher notices the wife of the prisoner. "Her husband is in the dock to-day! God keep you strong, O warm-hearted daughter of Innisfail; for yours, after all, is a sore strait and *dire travail* this winter morning, and love stronger than death *must be quivering your heart-strings as he plays them with painful touch to melodies that make the eyes run over, and the throat full to choking. I will not look at you any more*, but wish you *well*," &c.

"SILENCE IN THE COURT" is illustrated thus: "THE HARSH VOICE of the crier recals me to the scene around."

Next picture is "THE GLADIATORS.—There they are, with piles of briefs before them: pulling more still out of their bags, and arranging the

calf-covered tomes that strew the table before them." One of the "Gladiators" is the counsel for the prisoner: "I gaze on his face *in* this November morning. *This* is a God in Israel, a Boanerges in the law, and how mighty must thou have been in thy pride and power *before whom* his *arguments were burst like burning tow for a captive's gyves.*" (What *does* this mean?) Another counsel is the best "to turn a judge from his *peccadilloes* with *a midriff tickling* joke —the best to *catch a legal hiatus* and drive a coach-and-four through the gap;" both of which wonderful performances would be worth seeing "in" any November morning.

These are some few flowers of the fine writing brought out by the late "movement." A little too much of this "fine" writing, this remembrance of Erin of the Days of Old (welcome enough in a melody at the piano), this ringing the changes on "Tyranny," "Saxon oppressors," and the like! It has led to the bitter and prosy end of penal servitude through long monotonous wearisome years, with no shine upon them, and no stage-gilding whatever. O for the patriotism that will look more to the physical wants of the country and less to its politics—that will aid and foster everything that will tend to the improvement of the people, and that will bring money into the land—and O for the patriotism that will be "down" on the disturber of harmony—be he Trojan or Tyrian, Papist or Orangeman—with the same impartial hand!

HALF A MILLION OF MONEY.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "BARBARA'S HISTORY."

CHAPTER XCV. BROUGHT TO BAY.

With closed windows, lighted lamp, and curtains jealously drawn, Saxon Trefalden and Mr. Guthrie sat together, ominously silent, in the larger salon of the Château de Peyrolles. On the table were placed pens, paper, and ink. The ante-room was left in darkness, and the folding-doors between stood a little apart. All was very still—in the house no voice, no footfall, no sound of life; out of doors, nothing but the weary moaning of the wind, and the creaking of the weathercocks upon the turrets overhead.

They were waiting for William Trefalden.

Miss Rivière had withdrawn to her chamber, partly to escape all sight or hearing of the coming interview, and partly to make such slight preparation as might be necessary before leaving the château; the clergyman having promptly volunteered to find her a temporary asylum with the family of an English merchant settled at Bordeaux. It was therefore arranged that the carriage should be in readiness at the back entrance shortly after seven o'clock; and then, as soon as was practicable, they were all three to hasten back to Bordeaux as fast as Saxon's post-horses could carry them. In the mean while the appointed hour came and went, the two men waited, and still no William Trefalden made his appearance.

Presently the pendule on the mantelshelf chimed the quarter.

Mr. Guthrie looked at his watch. Saxon rose, went over to the nearest window, pushed aside the curtain, and looked out. It was now dusk; but there was still a pale, lurid gleam upon the horizon, by the light of which the young man could see the great clouds rolling together overhead, like the mustering of many armies.

"It will be a wild night," he said, as he resumed his chair.

"Hush!" replied the clergyman. "I hear wheels."

They listened; but the vehicle came along at a foot-pace, and went slowly round by the yard at the back of the château.

"It is only our own post-chaise," said Saxon.

And then they were again silent.

Five minutes, ten minutes, a quarter of an hour went by, and the pendule chimed again. It was now half-past seven.

All at once, Saxon held up his hand, and bent his head attentively.

"I hear nothing," said the clergyman.

"I hear a carriage and pair—coming very quickly—from the direction of Bordeaux!"

Mr. Guthrie smiled doubtfully; but Saxon's trained ear could not be deceived. In another moment the sound became faintly audible, then grew gradually louder, and ceased at last before the gates of the château.

Saxon looked out again.

"I see the carriage outside the gates," he said. "They are opened by a boy carrying a lantern. He alights—he pays the driver—he crosses the court-yard—the carriage drives away. He is here!"

With this he dropped the curtain and turned down the lamp, so as to leave the room in half-shadow; while Mr. Guthrie, in accordance with their preconcerted plan, went out into the dark ante-room, and took up his station close against the door.

Presently they heard William Trefalden's voice chatting pleasantly with the housekeeper in the hall, and then his footsteps on the stairs. Outside the door he seemed to pause for an instant, then turned the handle and came in. Finding himself in the dark, he deposited something heavy on the floor, and, guided by the narrow line of light between the folding-doors, moved towards the second salon. As he did this, Mr. Guthrie softly locked the door, and put the key in his pocket. Slight as the sound was, the lawyer heard it.

"What's that?" he said quickly, and stopped half way.

He listened, holding his breath the while; then sprang forward, threw the doors open, and passed into the adjoining room.

As he did so, Saxon turned on the full light of the table-lamp, and the two men stood suddenly revealed to each other face to face.

"At last—traitor!"

A frightful pallor—that deadly pallor which is

born not of fear but of hatred—spread itself slowly over William Trefalden's countenance, and there remained. No other sign betrayed the tumult within. Haughty as an Indian at the stake, he folded his arms, and met his cousin's eye unflinchingly.

Thus they stood for a second or two, both silent. Then Mr. Guthrie came in from the ante-room, shut the folding-doors, and took his seat at the table; while Saxon resumed his former place, and, pointing to a chair standing apart from the rest, said:

"Please to sit there, William Trefalden."

The lawyer, with a sharp glance of recognition at the clergyman, flung himself into the chair.

"May I ask what this means?" he said, contemptuously. "An amateur Star Chamber?"

"It means justice and retribution," replied Saxon, sternly.

Mr. Trefalden smiled, leaned back in his chair, and waited for what should come next. He knew that all was over. He knew that his fairy gold had turned to withered leaves, and that the paradise of his dreams had suddenly vanished away, leaving in its place only the endless desert and the burning sands. He knew that the edifice which he had been rearing month after month with such consummate skill, was shattered to dust—that the die on which he had staked reputation, country, personal safety, and his whole worldly future, had turned up a blank at the very moment when he believed the prize his own. He knew that Helen Rivière would never, never now be wife of his; would never grace his home and gladden his heart with her smiles; never learn to give him love for love, in all the weary years that were to come! He knew that from this time forth he was a marked man, a branded felon, dependent on the mercy of the kinsman whom he had betrayed; and yet, knowing all this, his self-command never wavered, his eye never quailed, his voice never faltered for an instant. He was desperate; but his pride and his courage were at least equal to his despair.

Saxon, sitting at the head of the table with his head leaning on his hand, looked down for some moments in silence.

"I have not much to say to you, William Trefalden," he began presently; "and what little I have to say must be said briefly. To reproach one who could act as you have acted would be idle. If you had any heart to be touched, any sense of honour to be awakened, neither you nor I would be sitting here to-night."

Still smiling scornfully, the lawyer listened, apparently with the greatest indifference.

"To keep, then, to plain facts," continued the young man, "you have defrauded me of two millions of money; you have that money in your possession; you are at this moment my prisoner; and I have but to call in the aid of the village police, and convey you to Bordeaux in the carriage which now waits below for that purpose. Such is your position, and such is mine. But I am unwilling to push matters to extremity. I am unwilling to attach public scandal to the name which you are the first of our family to disgrace. For my uncle's sake and my own, and from respect to the memory of many generations of honest men, I have decided to offer you a fair alternative."

He paused and referred to a slip of paper lying beside him on the table.

"In the first place," he continued, "I require you to restore the money of which you have robbed me. In the second place, you must sign a full confession of your guilt, both as regards the two millions stolen from myself, and the twenty-five thousand pounds of which you have defrauded the Earl of Castletowers. In the third place, you must betake yourself to America, and never again be seen on this side the Atlantic. If you agree to these conditions, I consent to screen you from the law, and will give you the sum of one thousand pounds to help you forward honestly in the new life before you."

"And supposing that I decline the conditions," said Mr. Trefalden, calmly. "What then?"

"Then I simply ring this bell, and the boy who just now opened the gates to you will at once summon a couple of sergents de ville from the village."

The lawyer only elevated his eyebrows in the least perceptible degree.

"Your decision, if you please."

"My decision?" replied Mr. Trefalden, with as much apparent indifference as if the subject under consideration were the binding of a book or the framing of a picture. "Well—it appears to me that I am allowed no freedom of choice."

"Am I to understand that you accept my conditions?"

"I suppose so."

"Where, then, is the money?"

"In the adjoining room. You have but to take possession of it."

Mr. Guthrie rose, fetched the carpet-bag, and placed it on the table.

"Your keys, if you please."

William Trefalden produced three small keys on a ring, and handed them to the clergyman.

"You will find the money excellently invested," he said, looking on with unruffled composure while the bag, the deed-box, and the cash-box were successively opened. The contents of the last were then turned out upon the table, and Mr. Guthrie, with a view to ascertaining whether the whole sum was actually there represented, proceeded to examine each item separately. But he found, after a very few minutes, that the attempt was fruitless. The notes and specie offered no difficulties, but of notes and specie there was, comparatively, but a small proportion, while the bulk of the booty consisted of securities of the value of which he could form no opinion, and precious stones which it would have needed a lapidary's knowledge to appraise.

"I confess," he said, "that I am wholly un-

equal to the task of verifying this money. It needs a better man of business than myself."

"Then it must go unverified," said Saxon, taking up rouleaux and papers as they came, and thrusting them back again, pell-mell, into the box. "I am no man of business myself, and I cannot prolong this painful investigation beyond to-night. We will go on to the declaration."

"If you will tell me what you wish said, I will draw it up for you," said Mr. Guthrie.

Saxon then whispered his instructions, and the clergyman's pen ran swiftly over the paper. When it was all written, he read the declaration aloud.

"I, William Trefalden, of Chancery-lane, London, attorney-at-law, do acknowledge and confess to having obtained the sum of two millions sterling from my cousin, Saxon Trefalden, of Switzerland, with intent to defraud him of the same; and I confess to having deceived him with the belief that I had invested it for his use and advantage in the shares of a certain supposititious Company, which Company had no actual existence, but was wholly invented and imagined by myself to serve my own fraudulent ends. I also confess to having invested those two millions in such foreign and other securities as I conceived would turn to my own future profit, and to having fled from England with the whole of the property thus abstracted, intending to escape therewith to the United States of America, and appropriate the same to my own purposes.

"I likewise confess to having, two years since, received the sum of twenty-five thousand pounds from my client, Gervase Leopold Wynneclyffe, Earl of Castletowers, which sum it was my duty to have straightway paid over into the hands of Oliver Behrens, Esq., of Bread-street, London, for the liquidation of a mortgage debt contracted by Lord Castletowers some four years previously; but which sum I did, nevertheless, appropriate to my own uses, continuing to pay only the interest thereof, as heretofore, in the name of my client.

"And I allege that this confession, both as regards the offence committed by me against my cousin, Saxon Trefalden, of Switzerland, and as regards the offence committed by me against my client, the Earl of Castletowers, is in all respects substantially and absolutely true, as witness my signature, given in presence of the under-mentioned witnesses, this twenty-second day of September, Anno Domini eighteen hundred and sixty."

Mr. Guthrie, having read the statement through, passed it across the table. William Trefalden, still leaning back carelessly in his chair, affected to smile at the lawyer-like way in which the clergyman had rounded his sentences, but, as the reading proceeded, frowned, and beat his heel impatiently upon the polished floor.

Saxon pushed the inkstand towards him.

"Your signature," he said.

The lawyer rose—took up a pen—dipped it in the ink—hesitated—and then, with a sudden movement of disdain, flung it back upon the table.

"You have your money," he said, impatiently. "What more can you want?"

"I require the evidence of your guilt."

"I cannot—will not sign it. Take your money, in God's name, and let me go!"

Saxon rose, pale and implacable; his hand upon the bell.

"The alternative lies before you," he said. "Sign, or I give the signal."

William Trefalden cast a hasty glance about the room, as if looking for some weapon wherewith to slake the hatred that glittered in his eye; then, muttering a fierce oath between his teeth, snatched up the pen, and, as it were, dug his name into the paper.

"There, curse you!" he said, savagely. "Are you satisfied?"

Mr. Guthrie affixed his own signature as witness to the confession, and Saxon did the same.

"Yes," the young man replied, "I am satisfied. It only remains for me to fulfil my share of the compact."

And he selected Bank of England notes to the value of one thousand pounds.

The lawyer deliberately tore them into as many fragments.

"I would die a dozen deaths," he said, "sooner than owe a crust to your bounty."

"As you please. At all events, you are now free."

Hereupon Mr. Guthrie rose, took the key from his pocket, and unlocked the outer door. The lawyer followed him. On the threshold he turned.

"Saxon Trefalden," he said, in a low, deep, concentrated tone, "if ever man hated man, I hate you. I hated you before I ever beheld you, and I have hated you with a tenfold hatred from the hour when we first met face to face. Remember that. Remember that my deadly curse will be upon you and about you all the days of your life—upon your children, and upon your children's children—upon your marriage-bed, and your death-bed, and your grave. There is no sorrow, no disease, no shame, that I do not pray may embitter your life, and blast your name in this world—no extremity of despair and anguish which I do not hope may fall to your portion in the next. Take this for my farewell."

There was something frightful in the absence of all passion and fury, in the cold, calm, deliberate emphasis with which William Trefalden uttered this parting malediction; but Saxon heard it with a face of solemn pity and wonder, and looked at him steadily from the first word to the last.

"May God forgive you as I do," he then said devoutly. "May God in his infinite mercy forgive you and pity you, and soften your heart, and not visit those curses upon your own unhappy head."

But William Trefalden was already gone, and heard no word of his cousin's pardon.

CHAPTER XCVI. GONE!

Steadily, sternly, William Trefalden went down the broad stone stairs and into the hall. Here the housekeeper, coming from the empty dining-room and wondering what great trouble was in the house, started at the sight of him, as if he were a ghost. He passed her as he would have passed a tree by the roadside, took his hat mechanically, and went out. At the gates he paused. The key was on the inside; but he fumbled with it confusedly, and could not turn the lock. The housekeeper, looking after him with a sort of vague terror, called to Jacques to open the gates for monsieur; whereupon Jacques, clattering across the yard in his sabots, came running, lantern in hand, and turned the key in an instant.

Monsieur passed out into the lane like a man in a dream, and having gone a few steps, stood still and leaned against the wall. The wind blew fiercely, bringing heavy drops of rain with it every now and again; but of this he seemed unconscious. Then he went slowly down the lane and out upon the high road. To the right lay Bordeaux, a good ten miles away; to the left, bordering the road for some little distance on either side, but lying for the most part somewhat back among the vineyards, came the village. He stopped, walked a few yards in this direction, a few yards in that, and then stopped again, feeling faint and stunned, and all unlike himself.

It was a case of reaction, mental and physical. He had gone through a terrific ordeal, and it had now begun to tell upon him, body and brain. Dimly conscious of this, he tried to collect his thoughts—tried to consider what it was that he wanted to do, and which way he should go next. Then he suddenly remembered that he had been travelling since noon, and had not dined that day. He would go to the auberge in the village, and there get some food and some brandy—above all, some brandy. It would put life into him; steady him; lift this weight from his brain, and restore him to himself.

Acting upon this instinct, he made his way to the Lion d'Or. Two old peasants, chatting over their half bottle of thin red wine in a corner of the public room, looked up as he came in; and the master of the house, recognising the English monsieur, who was to occupy his best bedchamber that night, left his game of dominoes and rose respectfully. Did monsieur desire to see his room? The room was quite ready, and he thought monsieur would be content with it. Could monsieur have refreshment? Without doubt. Monsieur could have whatever refreshment he pleased—a cutlet, an omelette, a dish of ham, a fowl even, if monsieur did not object to wait while it was cooked. Good; a cutlet—a cutlet and some cognac. He had excellent cognac; vieux cognac, if monsieur indeed preferred it to wine. Monsieur should be served immediately. The cutlet would not take five minutes to prepare. In the mean while, would monsieur be pleased to occupy this small table by the window.

William Trefalden dropped into the chair placed for him by the landlord, and there sat in a kind of stupor—his hat on, his elbows resting on the table, his chin supported on his hands. His hair and clothes were damp; his feet were deadly cold; his teeth chattered: but of all this he was wholly unconscious. He only knew that he felt crushed and paralysed, that he wanted to think of something and had no power to do so, that the brandy would put him straight—the brandy! the brandy

He called for it impatiently, and while the landlord went to fetch it, fell to wondering again what the thing was that he failed so strangely to remember. It tormented him. It haunted him. He seemed ever on the point of seizing it, and, failing to seize it, groped about in a kind of mental darkness that was inexpressibly painful.

Then the brandy came—about a quarter of a pint in a tiny decanter, accompanied by a liqueur glass equally diminutive. He pushed the glass angrily aside, poured the whole of the spirit into a tumbler, and drank it at a draught. It went down his throat like fire; but he had no sooner swallowed it than the pressure on his brain was relieved. After a few moments he felt warmer, steadier. Then his thoughts cleared suddenly. He remembered all that had happened; and with memory came back the whole flood of rage, grief, hatred, love, despair!

He knew now what the thought was—that vague thought which had so oppressed and eluded him a few moments since. It was vengeance.

Ay, vengeance. Bitter, deadly, terrible vengeance—vengeance swift and bloody! He told himself that he would have it, be the cost what it might. He would give his own life for it willingly, and count it cheaply purchased. The word mounted to his brain, throbbed in his pulse, tingled in his ears, mastered and took possession of him, like a fiend.

He knew that he must plan his vengeance quickly. It must be planned, prepared, executed at once. The blow must fall as suddenly and fatally as the shaft of the lightning. How was this to be done? With what weapon?

The landlord came bustling in with a pile of covered plates in his hands and a napkin under his arm. Monsieur's dinner. Monsieur would find that the cook had done her best at so short a notice. Here was a little soup; here also were cutlets, fried potatoes, and a dish of beans. The omelette would be ready for monsieur as soon as monsieur was ready for the omelette.

But William Trefalden was in no state to do justice to the fare before him. He tasted the soup, and pushed it aside. He tried to taste the meat, but set the morsel down without putting it to his lips. The brandy had supplied him with a factitious strength, and he now loathed the sight and smell of solid food. One thing he took, however, from the dinner-table—a knife.

He watched his moment, and slipped it up his sleeve when no one was observing him. It was a short black-handled knife, worn to an edge on

both sides—a knife that was to all intents and purposes a dagger.

This done, he rapped impatiently for the landlord, bade him remove the dishes, and called for more brandy.

The landlord was distressed beyond measure. Was not the soup to monsieur's taste? Were not the cutlets tender? Would not monsieur permit him to bring the omelette? Hélas! was monsieur finding himself ill? Would monsieur choose a cup of tea? More cognac? Good. Monsieur should have it immediately.

The cognac was brought, and he drank again eagerly; this time from a wine-glass. The craving for it was irresistible. It was a second-rate spirit, more fiery than strong; but it stimulated him; spurred him to his purpose; nerved his arm and quickened his brain. For all this, he was not intoxicated. He felt that he could drink a bottle of it without producing that result. So he drank, and drank again; and as he drank, the fire coursed through his veins till at last he felt that he could sit there, brooding and silent, no longer.

He rose and went out hurriedly. The two old peasants shook their heads over their wine and looked after him. Diable! There was surely something strange about the man. Was he ill? Or mad? Or had he drunk too much cognac? Bah! was he not an Englishman, and used to it? Englishmen, look you, mon voisin, drink cognac like water!

The rain was now driving furiously before the wind, and sweeping down the road in great gusts, before which the poplars moaned and shivered like living things. What with the sudden shock of cooler air, and what with the fever in his blood, the lawyer reeled at first meeting the wind and rain, and could scarcely keep his feet. But this was only for a moment. He recovered himself instantly, and fighting his way in the teeth of the storm, crept under the lee of the houses till he came to the side road leading to the Château de Peyrolles. He found it with difficulty, for the night was pitch-dark and the rain blinding. On the high road where all was open, it was yet possible to see a few feet in advance; but here in the lane, shut in by trees and high walls on both sides, he could only feel his way along like a blind man.

At length he came upon the gates. They were again locked upon the inside. He tried them—tried to slip his hand between the bars and turn the key in the lock; but the bars were too close, and he could not get his fingers far enough. Then he stopped, clinging to the gate with both hands, and staring in. The darkness was so intense that he could not distinguish the outline of the house; but he saw lights still burning in some of the rooms. One in an upper chamber especially fixed his attention. Was that window hers?

Oh! the passion, the despair, the desperate longing that seized upon him at this thought! If he could but see her once again!—see her; speak to her; touch her hand; tell her how, though false to all the world beside, he had been true at least to her from first to last! He felt that he had never half told her how he loved her. He had never even kissed her—never once; for his respect had been as profound as his love, and from one so young, so helpless, so bereaved, he had not dared to claim the smallest privilege of a lover. He felt now that he would give his soul to clasp her in his arms and press his lips to hers. Good God! how he loved her! How his heart hungered for her!

He shook the gates with all his might—strove to clamber over them—flung himself against them; but in vain. Then he pressed his face against the bars, like a prisoner at the prison gate, and, sobbing, called upon her name. But his voice was borne away by the wind, and the pitiless rain drove in his face and mingled with his tears.

While he was yet clinging there in the darkness with his eyes fixed upon the upper window, the light suddenly vanished. He had made so certain that it was her light and her window, that the disappearance of that little spark fell upon him like a blow. He felt as if the last link were now broken between them—the last hope gone.

Almost at the same moment, he saw a lantern (carried apparently by an invisible hand) moving across the upper end of the court-yard. Again he shook the gates, and shouted furiously. The lantern paused—moved on—paused again; and at last came quickly towards him. Then the bearer held it high above his head with one hand, shaded his eyes with the other, and asked roughly—"Qui est là?"

It was Jacques—the same Jacques who had let him out an hour or two before, and who, recognising his voice, again unlocked the gates and admitted him.

"Tiens!" said he. "They are all in bed là bas."

William Trefalden's heart leaped with fierce exultation.

"No matter," he replied. "My visit is to the gentleman. Tell me where he sleeps. That is enough."

"What gentleman, m'sieur?"

"He who came to-day with the English curé. Quick! Time presses, and my business is urgent."

"But the strange gentleman is no longer here. He went away about half an hour after monsieur."

"Went away!"

"Yes, m'sieur—in a cabriolet with four horses, taking Monsieur le Curé and the young lady with him."

"Dog, it is a lie!—a lie, and you are paid to tell it! Give me the truth—the truth this instant, or I strangle you!"

And, half beside himself, the lawyer twisted his hands in the lad's collar as if he meant what he said.

"Ah, monsieur!—for the love of God, mon-

sieur!—it is indeed the truth—if you kill me for it, it is the truth!"

"Where is Madame Bouïsse?"

"Gone to bed, m'sieur!"

"Then wake her—tell her I must see her. If she were dying, I must see her. Do you hear?"

"Yes, m'sieur."

Trembling from head to foot, Jacques picked up the lantern which he had dropped in his extremity of terror, and led the way into the house. They went straight to the housekeeper's chamber, where William Trefalden thundered at the door as if he would bring it down. Madame Bouïsse made her appearance, well-nigh startled out of her wits, and wrapped in the counterpane of her bed.

It was quite true—undeniably true. The young Englishman was gone, and had taken mam'selle with him. They left about twenty minutes or half an hour after monsieur took his departure. Madame Bouïsse believed they were gone to Bordeaux. Monsieur was free to search the house if he chose; but he would assuredly find that she, Madame Bouïsse, was not deceiving him. They were gone.

Gone!

Without waiting to hear or utter another word, he snatched the lantern from the boy's hand and rushed up-stairs. From suite to suite, from floor to floor, through rooms yet full of the evidences of recent occupation, down again, out of the house, and across the court-yard he went, shivering the lantern to fragments on the wet stones as he reached the gates! Then he paused, turned, lifted up his hands in the darkness, heaped curses on the place, and raged against it impotently, like a madman.

Till now he had been comparatively calm. Busy with his scheme of vengeance, he had put restraint upon his words, and even to a certain degree upon his looks. But now—now he no longer attempted to curb the fire within—now the lava-tide of rage and hate welled-up and overflowed, and bore him along, unresisting.

Gone!

Impelled by an instinct that seemed to take the place of sight, he ran down the lane and out upon the high road. The Lion d'Or was now closed for the night; but he battered fiercely at the door till it was opened. The landlord, sleepily obsequious, ventured to remark that monsieur was late; but William Trefalden interrupted him at the first word.

"I must have a cabriolet and post-horses," he said. "At once—do you hear?"

The landlord shook his head.

"Mon Dieu, monsieur!" he said, "the Lion d'Or is not a posting-house."

"But you have horses?"

"None, monsieur."

"Then where can I get them? Quick—quick, for your life!"

"Nowhere in Drouay, monsieur."

"But is there no farmer, no shopkeeper, no creature in the place who can be found to drive me to Bordeaux? I will pay anything. Fool! do you understand?—*Anything!*"

But the landlord only shrugged his shoulders and protested that not a soul in Drouay would be induced to undertake the job at such an hour, and in such weather.

The lawyer clenched his teeth, and stamped with rage.

"Then I must walk," he said. "Give me some more brandy before I go."

The landlord held up his hands in feeble expostulation. Walk! Great Heaven! Walk three leagues and a half in this terrible storm! Let monsieur only listen to the rain—listen to the wind—think how dark it was, and how lonely! Besides, monsieur was wet through already.

But Mr. Trefalden broke in with a fierce oath, and bade the man hold his peace and bring the brandy instantly.

Then he poured out half a tumblerful, drank it recklessly, flung a napoleon on the table, and rushed out again into the storm.

He was now utterly beside himself—his brain reeling, his blood on fire, his whole frame throbbing with fever and fury. The landlord of the Lion d'Or, thankful to be rid of him, shut and barred the door and went straightway up to bed, resolved not to admit him again under any circumstances. In the mean while he seemed to have lost sight of his determination to walk to Bordeaux, and went raving and gesticulating up and down the village, where all, except himself, were sleeping quietly.

Thus pacing to and fro like a caged beast, he suddenly became aware of the approach of a travelling-carriage. On it came, thundering through the one straggling street of Drouay, with flaring lamps, steaming horses, splash and clatter of wheels, and the loud cracking of the postilion's whip. He ran to meet it—he shouted—he implored to be taken up—he would pay any price only to stand upon the step, if they would let him! But the postilion took him for a beggar, and shook his whip at him; and the travellers inside, cut off from him by windows opaque with damp, and deafened by the rattle of their own wheels and the pelting of the rain upon the carriage roof, neither saw nor heard him. Still he ran beside it, panting and shouting—tried to clutch at the traces, but, receiving a savage lash across the hands, fell back and made a desperate effort to spring up behind. But all in vain. He missed his hold; and the carriage swept on, and left him there despairing.

Still, still he ran, fated, irresponsible, headlong—now stumbling among the sharp flints in the road—now getting up with hands all cut and bleeding—now pausing to take breath—now fancying he could still hear the retreating wheels; and so, drenched, giddy, breathless, his hat gone, his face and clothes disfigured with mud and rain, rushing blindly on again!

Each moment the storm increased and the wind rose higher, till at last it culminated in a

terrific hurricane. Then the thunder came up in heavy peals, the lightning burst over the plain in rapid flashes, and the wind tore up the vines by the roots and whirled them wildly away, with all their vintage promise, towards the sea. Yet still, urged forward by that fierce thirst which blood alone could slake, with murder in his heart and madness in his brain, William Trefalden ran—fell—struggled to his feet—staggered on again—fell again—and so for miles and miles!

Next morning early, when the storm-clouds were drifting off raggedly towards the west with now and then a gleam of uncertain sunshine between, a party of peasant folk coming up from the way of Medoc found the body of a man lying face downwards in a pool by the roadside. His clothes, face, and hands were torn and blood-stained. He had a watch upon his person, and in his waistcoat-pocket a porte-monnaie full of bank-notes and napoleons. No letter, no card, no token by which it might be possible to identify him, could be discovered upon the body. His very linen was unmarked.

The honest country-folk laid this nameless corpse across one of their mules, and brought it charitably into the dead-house at Bordeaux. Having lain there unclaimed for forty-eight hours, it was buried in the new cemetery beyond the walls, with a small black cross at the head of the grave, on which the only inscription was a row of numerals. His watch, his money, and his clothes were awarded by the préfet to the poor of the parish in which the body was found.

EPILOGUE.

The world knows the Italian story by heart. How Garibaldi entered Naples; how, at Della Catena, he saluted Victor-Emmanuel as King of Italy; how he sheathed his sword when the great work was so far done, and went back to his solitude at Caprera, are facts which need no recapitulation. Had one man lived but a few months—nay, a few weeks—longer, the tale might perchance have ended differently. Where we now read Florence we might have read Rome; for "Regno d'Italia" on printed stamp and minted coin, a word of broader significance and more antique glory. But the ideal Republic died with Giulio Colonna, and was buried in his grave.

In the mean while, Olimpia's life became a blank. Her father had been the very light of her inner world. Bred in his political faith, trained in his employ, accustomed to look up to him, to work with him, to share his most secret councils, his wildest hopes, his fears, his errors, and even his personal dangers, she seemed to lose the half of her own soul when he was snatched from her. Then came the sudden change of programme—a change to her so bewildering, so unworthy, so fatal! Mistrusting Sardinia, and scorning the very name of a monarchical Italy, Olimpia conceived that her father's memory was insulted in this compromise, and so, in the bitterness of her resentment and grief, withdrew herself altogether from the work in which her life had been spent. Avoiding all with whom she had laboured and acted in time past, and keeping up no more than the merest thread of intercourse with even those whom she used to call her friends, she then made her home at Chiswick, in the quiet house to which Saxon had conducted her on the evening of their arrival in London. Here she lived solitary and apart, cherishing her sorrow, mourning the great scheme unachieved, and learning that hard lesson of patience which all enthusiasts have to learn in this world sooner or later.

Not thus Lord Castletowers. Too English, too unprejudiced, and it may be added too sensible, to attach paramount importance to the mere shibboleth of a party, he welcomed the settlement of Italian affairs with a heartiness that he would perhaps scarcely have ventured to express very loudly in the presence of Colonna's daughter. Where she refused to recognise any vital difference between a monarchical government and a pure despotism, he was far-sighted enough to look forward to that free and prosperous future which most thinking men now prophesy for the kingdom of Italy, nor was he slow to perceive that there might be hope for himself in the turn that matters had taken. The Italian question thus far solved, Italy would no longer need so much support from her well-wishers. With a liberal monarch at the head of the nation, a parliament to vote supplies, and an army to defend the national territory, the whole system of patriotic black-mail levying must necessarily collapse. Olimpia would therefore no longer feel herself bound to sacrifice her hand to "one who could do more for Italy" than himself. So the Earl loved and hoped on, and wisely bided his time.

Wisely, too, he applied himself in the mean while to the improvement of his own worldly position. Occupying his friend Saxon's vacant chambers in St. James's-street, he devoted himself to his parliamentary duties with a zeal that drew upon him the attention of one or two very noble and influential personages. Having made a couple of really brilliant speeches during the spring session of 1861, and happening to be upon the spot when a man of ability and tact was needed at a moment's notice, he had the good fortune to be entrusted with a somewhat delicate and difficult mission to one of those petty German potentates who make up for very small territories by gigantic pretensions, and balance a vast amount of pride against a scanty revenue.

The Earl, as a matter of course, acquitted himself perfectly, and began thenceforth to be talked of among his elders as "a rising man." Then the Duke of Doncaster smiled graciously upon him, and several of the cabinet ministers fell into the way of asking him to their political dinners; and the end of it all was, that just before the setting in of the long vacation, Gervase Leopold Wynneclyffe, Earl of Castletowers, found himself inducted one morning into a very neat little vacancy in the Perquisite Office,

where the work was light and the salary heavy, and the chance of promotion considerable. Then, and not till then, he ventured to renew his suit to Olimpia Colonna.

The moment was favourable. A year of mourning had passed over her head, and the intense solitude of heart which had been at first her only solace now began to weigh painfully upon her. She had had time to think of many things—time to live down some errors and outlive some hopes—time also to remember how long and well the Earl had loved her; how worthy he was of all the love that she could give him in return; how he had shed his blood for her Italy; and with what devotion he had performed the last sad duties of a son towards her father's ashes. Besides all this, her occupation was gone. She could no longer immolate herself for Italy, for the simple reason that Italy was satisfied to rest awhile upon her present gains, and preferred being left to settle her own affairs in a quiet constitutional way. The disaster at Aspromonte convinced Miss Colonna of this truth, and of the stability of the new régime. And over and above all these considerations, Olimpia loved the Earl. She had loved him all along—even when she refused him; and now, after a whole year of sorrow, she loved him better than before. So she accepted him—accepted him very frankly and simply, as a true woman should, and promised to be his wife before the ending of the year.

Secure in the consciousness of her splendid birth, Olimpia never dreamed for one moment that Lady Castletowers could be other than content and happy in this new alliance of their houses. That the proud Alethea Holme-Pierrepoint would in this solitary instance have been prepared to sacrifice blood for gold—nay, would have actually welcomed a Miss Hatherton with her two hundred and fifty thousand pounds more gladly than a portionless Colonna,—was a possibility that could by no chance enter within the sphere of her calculations. So when Lady Castletowers came over to see her the next day in her humble suburban home, and kissed her on both cheeks, and said all the pretty and gracious things that the mother of her betrothed husband was bound, under the circumstances, to say, Olimpia accepted it all in perfect faith, nor guessed what a bitter disappointment lay hidden beneath that varnish of smiles and embraces. The Earl, having himself borne the brunt of her ladyship's displeasure, was, it need scarcely be said, careful to keep the secret very close indeed.

In the mean while, Saxon Trefalden had gone back to Switzerland; and there, despite the urgent remonstrances of those dear friends who missed his little dinners and his inexhaustible cheque-books, persistently remained. In vain did the Erectheum lift up its voice in despair; in vain did Blackwall lament and Richmond refuse to be comforted, and Italian prima donnas sigh for banquets and bracelets gone by. The boyish, laughing, lavish millionnaire was fairly gone, and declined to come back again. The Syrens might sing; but Odysseus only stopped his ears and sailed by unheeding.

The Earl alone knew that he was married; but even the Earl knew no more. He felt it to be somewhat hard that his friend should neither have invited him to his wedding, nor have taken him in any way into his confidence upon so important a matter. He could not but be conscious, too, that there was something strange and secret about the whole proceeding. Who had he married? Was the bride pretty or plain? Rich or poor? Dark or fair? Gentle or simple? What was her age? Her name? her rank? her nation?

In reply to the first announcement of his friend's marriage, the Earl had ventured delicately to hint at two or three of these inquiries; but as Saxon limited his rejoinder to the fact that his wife was "an angel," Lord Castletowers naturally felt that the statement was hardly so explicit as it might have been.

On all other points Saxon was frank and communicative as ever. He laid his every project before his friend as unreservedly in his letters as if they two had been sitting face to face over the fire in the smoking-room at Castletowers, or leaning side by side in the moonlight over the taffrail of the Albula. They were delightful letters, filled to overflowing with all kinds of general detail: now telling of the new château which was already in progress; now of the bridge just built at Ortenstein, or the road to be made between Tamins and Flims; now describing a national fête at Chur, or an entertainment at the Château Planta; now relating all about the cotton-mills which Saxon was erecting in the valley, or the enormous pasture tracts lately purchased, and the herds of Scotch cattle imported to stock them; now giving a sketch of the design just received from the architect at Geneva for that church at Altfelden on which Pastor Martin's heart had been set for the last thirty years—keeping the Earl constantly au courant, in fact, of every particular of his friend's busy and benevolent life among the simple people of his native canton.

At length it was the Earl's turn to announce the happiness so shortly to be his; and then Saxon wrote to entreat that the newly-married pair would extend their wedding-journey as far as the valley of Domleschg, and be his guests awhile. "My wife," he said, "desires to know you, and my uncle loves you already for my sake. On your wedding-day you will receive a parcel of papers, which you must accept as a souvenir of your friend."

The "parcel of papers" proved to be the title-deeds of the two farms sold to Mr. Sloper, and the title-deeds of Mr. Behrens' "box" and grounds at Castletowers. The farms were worth from ten to twelve thousand pounds apiece, to say nothing of the "fancy price" which Saxon had paid for the woolstapler's property. It was not a bad present, as presents go, and it made a rich man of the Earl of Castletowers; but he little thought, as he wrung Saxon's hand when they next met at Reichenau, that to the man who had presented him with that princely wedding-gift he owed not those farms alone, but Castle-

towers itself—Castletowers itself, with the ancestral oaks of which he was so proud, and the rare old house in which his forefathers had lived and died for centuries before him. That was the one secret that Saxon never confided to him—not even when, walking together under the apple-trees at the foot of the church-hill, he related the story of his own marriage, of his cousin's perfidy, and of the fate from which he had interposed to save Helen Rivière.

"And that," he said, "was how I came first to know her—how I came to love her—how I won her. I brought her home at once to the little château yonder. My uncle adored her from the first moment, and she adored him. I was almost jealous—that is, I should have been jealous, if it hadn't made me so happy. When she had been living here for about a month or five weeks, we came up one morning, all three together, to this little chapel upon the hill, and my uncle married us. There was no one present but Kettli and the organ-blower. After my uncle had blessed us and the ceremony was all over, we embraced and bade him adieu, and walked along the Thusis road till the cabriolet overtook us; and so we were married and went away, and no soul in Reichenau knew it till we were gone. We were so happy!"

"It is a strange story," said the Earl, "and a pretty story; and the best part of it is that you and I are cousins, Saxon, after all."

"Nay," replied Saxon, grasping his friend's hand in both his own, "it is not much to be only cousins when we have been brothers so long!"

A word remains to be added respecting the other moiety of the great Trefalden Legacy; that moiety which, according to the will of the testator, was to be bestowed in the endowment of a great charity, chiefly for the benefit of "Decayed Tradesmen, Mercantile Men, Ship-Brokers, Stock-Brokers, poor Clergymen, and Members of the Legal and Medical Professions, and the Widows and Orphans of each of those classes respectively." For the accommodation of these widows and orphans, the will went on to direct that a plot of freehold ground should be purchased, and that "a Suitable and Substantial Building" should be erected thereon under the superintendence of "some Eminent Architect;" and this building was to be called "The London Benevolent Trefalden Institution."

It is delightful to know that all this will certainly be done—some day. The money fell due on the third of April, 1860, and the sum then transferred to the credit of the trustees amounted to just four million seven hundred and seventy-six thousand two hundred and odd pounds. Since that time the exertions of the Right Honourable the Lord Mayor and Corporation have been beyond all praise. To say that they have either thought much, or done much, up to the present date, would perhaps be premature; but they have eaten an incalculable number of dinners on the subject, which, to the civic mind, means precisely the same thing. At these dinners they generally entertain a certain "Eminent Architect," which "Eminent Architect," being retained at a splendid salary for just so long as the works shall remain in progress, is naturally and laudably anxious to devote his life to the task. He therefore submits a plan now and then, or the modification of a plan, to the intelligent after-dinner criticisms of his honourable employers; and in that position the building-question now stands.

What site that "Suitable and Substantial Building" is destined to occupy, how much it will cost, what it will be like, and at what remote period in the future history of the world it may probably be completed, are questions which the present generation is advised not to consider too curiously. No intelligent and unprejudiced person can doubt, of course, that when the ground is bought, and the building is built, and the bills are all paid, and the dinners are all eaten, and the resident manager, clergyman, physician, secretary, housekeeper, and servants of the establishment are salaried on a scale befitting the splendour of the foundation, there will yet remain something for the "Decayed Tradesmen, Mercantile Men, Ship-Brokers, Stock-Brokers, poor Clergymen, and Members of the Legal and Medical professions, as well as for the Widows and Orphans of each of those classes respectively." In any case, however, the claims of these insignificant persons will not have to be considered in our time; how, then, can we do better than eat, drink, and be merry, after the enlightened fashion of our honourable friends, the Trefalden Trustees, and so leave the future to take care of itself?

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N°. 349.] SATURDAY, DECEMBER 30, 1865. [PRICE 2*d*.

AT THE BAR.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "A CRUISE UPON WHEELS," &c. &c.

CHAPTER XXXIV. CORNELIUS VAMPI.

WE advance yet another stage in the history of this strange trial, approaching very fast that point which may be looked upon as its climax. The witnesses for the defence are now about to be examined, and one of them has a tale to tell which will make a great change in this remarkable case.

The first witness examined was that lady who has already been alluded to in these pages, who had been governess for many years in the Descartes family, and who had thus enjoyed many opportunities of studying Gabrielle's character from childhood upwards. Miss Curtis came to bear her testimony to the kindness and gentleness of her late pupil's character. She had lived with her nine years, she said, and during that time had had every opportunity of watching her, and had seen her tried in all sorts of ways. Never, however, under any circumstances, had anything come out which betrayed a nature capable of entertaining even the thought of committing such an act as this with which she was charged. The mere idea of such a charge being brought against her would appear to any one who had known the accused, as witness had known her, almost ridiculous. The accused was humane and kind, even in a marked degree, to everybody with whom she came in contact. Her behaviour to servants and people of colour—a class generally treated with considerable hauteur by the European inhabitants of the West India Islands—had been such as to win the hearts of all the dependents who came in her way.

The prosecution had some questions to put in cross-examination, and Mr. Pry stood up:

Mr. Pry. In your position—that which you formerly occupied with regard to the prisoner—you must have had many opportunities of judging of her temper?

Witness. I had.

Mr. Pry. You had; just so. And how should you describe it?

Witness. I should call it a very good one.

Mr. Pry. A temper invariably unruffled and serene?

Witness. I do not mean that entirely. That would imply, under most circumstances, a nature that would be cold and phlegmatic. When I speak of a good temper, I mean one that may be startled into temporary irritation, but is quickly appeased.

Mr. Pry. Ah, I see. A good temper, in your estimation, means an irritable temper—liable to fits of passion, for instance?

Witness. No, that is very far from my meaning. Liable, I meant, to be provoked for a moment to irritation, but very forgiving, and anxious for reconciliation afterwards. That is what I call a good temper, and that was my pupil's temper pre-eminently.

Mr. Pry. Have you ever seen any indications of jealousy, now, appearing in the nature of the prisoner?

Witness. Not more than is almost inseparable from a warm and affectionate disposition.

Mr. Pry. You have observed such indications then?

Witness. I have already remarked——

Mr. Pry. I must trouble you for a direct answer to a direct question. Have you, or have you not?

Witness. I have, in a trifling degree.

The witness was going on to explain that she meant that some small childish indications—fears lest she should be superseded in the affections of those to whom she was greatly attached, were the only signs of jealousy which she remembered observing in her pupil, but the ingenious Mr. Pry would not allow these explanations, and would insist on a "yes" or "no" answer to everything. He was, however, put down himself shortly afterwards, when, trying to lead the witness on to a condemnation of the conduct of the accused in having married contrary to the wish of her parents, the court ruled that this was not evidence in the present trial; which it certainly was not.

The examination of this witness was to be followed immediately by that of Cornelius Vampi. This, since the allusion which had been made to its great importance in the speech of the counsel for the defence, was looked for by every one in court with the most eager anxiety, and so strong a feeling for that poor forlorn little figure in the dock had begun to lay hold of the spectators assembled to witness the trial, that men and women alike came to be touched with a feeling of partisanship as they looked at her, and were ready almost to offer up a prayer

that the evidence of this new witness might stand her in good stead.

There was a sort of stir and commotion in court now that the moment had arrived for the examination of this important personage, and there was even a certain buzz of whispered talk when the witness entered the box, and stood there, erect, portly, unembarrassed, ready to tell his tale.

His appearance was certainly calculated to inspire confidence in the minds of all who saw him. There was a certain guilelessness about him, a certain unworldliness, and a sense of enjoyment which no one could think—except, of course, the counsel for the other side—of associating with treachery or deceit. As he looked from the witness-box round about him on the assembled multitude, he seemed, as usual, positively to beam with good nature and happiness. As soon as he had been sworn, and had duly answered to his name, which seemed to make a great sensation in court, the questioning began, the examination in chief being conducted by Gilbert himself. The first question was an inquiry as to the nature of his occupation:

Witness. I am a herbalist and seedsman.

Mr. Penmore. You also sell drugs, do you not?

Witness. Drugs, corn-plaisters, horse and cattle medicines, cough lozenges, and a variety of other articles of the same nature, such as blisters, leeches, and galvanic belts.

Mr. Penmore. Do you remember a particular day in December last, when a lady came to your shop to make a purchase of laudanum?

Witness. I remember it very well.

Mr. Penmore. That visit was followed by others, was it not?

Witness. Yes, by several others.

Mr. Penmore. And always with the same object.

Witness. Yes, invariably.

Mr. Penmore. Did you make any difficulty about selling her the laudanum.

Witness. Yes, at first I did, and only allowed her to have a small quantity. She showed me, however, a doctor's order, addressed to some country chemist, directing that the bearer should be supplied with laudanum by him. It was dated two years back, and the place from which it was written was some town in the west of England, some unimportant place, the name of which I forget.

Mr. Penmore. And, on the strength of that, you allowed her to have the laudanum?

Witness. On the strength of that, and on her own representation that she positively required it as a medicine. She alleged that she was a great sufferer from neuralgia. She said that sometimes one of her eyes was seriously affected by the pain, and described it very particularly as running down one side of her face, from the eye to the angle of the jaw, which she said was part of the disease.

Mr. Penmore. Was it alleged that the laudanum was required for external use alone?

Witness. Not exclusively. She stated that it was principally for external application that she wanted it, but that sometimes, when suffering very much, she was obliged to take it internally as well.

Mr. Penmore. And, after that first application, did the lady come to you again?

Witness. Yes, very soon, and from that time her visits were frequent.

Mr. Penmore. Do you remember the occasion of her last visit?

Witness. Yes, perfectly. She made an appointment for another day, which was an unusual thing with her.

Mr. Penmore. Can you state the exact day on which she came to you last?

Witness. Yes, I have it down in my book (producing book). It was on the twenty-sixth of January, and the appointment she made was for the next day but one—the twenty-eighth.

Mr. Penmore. And that appointment was not kept?

Witness. No; I never saw her again.

Mr. Penmore. Did you know the lady's name?

Witness. No; she would never mention it.

Mr. Penmore. And was it not inscribed in the doctor's order which you spoke of?

Witness. No; the order alluded to her simply as "the bearer." There was no name.

Mr. Penmore. Were you sufficiently well acquainted with the appearance of the lady in question to be able to identify her personally?

Witness. Unquestionably.

Mr. Penmore. Could you identify her portrait—her photographic portrait?

Witness. I believe I could do so.

Mr. Penmore (after a slight delay, during which, amidst the most breathless silence in the court, a photograph was handed to the witness). Is that the portrait of the lady to whom you sold the laudanum?

Witness. It is. (The sensation among the spectators at this moment was marked and irrepressible. They seemed to breathe again.)

Mr. Penmore. You have no doubt upon the subject?

Witness. I have no doubt whatever.

[Old Judge (apart to young Judge). "This invention is becoming an important one in connexion with criminal jurisprudence."]

Examination resumed.

Mr. Penmore. Is there any other means of identification which suggests itself to you?

Witness. I should remember the bag or reticule which the lady used to bring with her.

Mr. Penmore. And how should you know it?

Witness. By the clasp, which I have often observed. It has a crest engraved upon it—a half lion rampant, holding a sword in one of its paws.

Mr. Penmore. Is that the bag in question? (A lady's bag, with gilt clasp, was here handed to the witness, who examined it, and especially the clasp, attentively.)

Witness. Yes, it is.

The counsel for the defence made a slight

pause here, and referred to some papers which he held in his hand. Then he spoke again; and it will be observed that from this moment he spoke of "the lady," who had hitherto been only so alluded to as "the deceased Miss Carrington," thus showing that he considered the identity of the two to be conclusively proved.

Mr. Penmore. The laudanum which you sold to the late Miss Carrington, was it supplied latterly by you in larger quantities?

Witness. Yes; she complained of not having enough, and of having to come so often, so that latterly she had it in larger quantities.

Mr. Penmore. I have only one more question to ask you, Mr. Vampi. Is this bottle one which has come from your shop? (A bottle was here handed to witness.)

Witness (after examining the bottle). Yes, I believe it to be so. At all events, it is the exact counterpart, in label and every other respect, of that which I should sell on such an occasion.

The excitement which attended the examination of Cornelius Vampi was from the first very great. It was shared by Gabrielle herself. To her, it must be remembered that his evidence was altogether new, and that it solved what was as great a difficulty to her as it had been to others, namely, the great doubt as to who it was who had really administered the poison to the deceased lady. She knew that she had *not*, that was all. She was so much interested in what this witness had to say, that, at last, half unconscious of what she did, she put aside her veil that she might see and hear the better. The sight of that innocent face impressed every one in court, and helped to turn the tide which had now begun to set in in her favour.

When Gilbert sat down, at the conclusion of the examination of Vampi, Serjeant Probyn, for the prosecution, instantly rose, prepared to conduct the cross-examination of this very important witness himself. An important witness indeed, for it was felt by every one that, unless his evidence should break down under cross-examination, it must most certainly turn the scale. The learned serjeant wore his most imposing air, and frowned upon the witness in silence for some time. But Cornelius was not the man to be put down in this way. What! he, who consorted on intimate terms with Jupiter and Mars, put down by a helpless mortal, who had probably never read a line of Albertus Magnus in his life. Not likely that.

There was a great deal of consultation between Serjeant Probyn and his junior, and much covert talk of attorneys at this time—a great deal of whispering and pushing about of notes written on small scraps of paper. At length the serjeant, still wearing a portentous frown, hitched his gown up at the shoulder, and began.

Serjeant Probyn. You call yourself "herbalist and seedsman," I think, do you not, Mr.—er—er—(referring to paper)—Mr. Vampi?

Witness. Yes, sir, I *am* a herbalist and seedsman.

Serjeant Probyn. And yet, despite this designation under which you are, so to speak, set forth, you are in the habit of selling medicines, and even, as it would appear, dangerous poisons?

Witness. I do occasionally.

Serjeant Probyn. Oh, you do occasionally; and may I ask why, under those circumstances, you do not style yourself "chemist" or "druggist?"

Witness. Because I am principally herbalist and seedsman. I put up the designation which I go by chiefly. If my shop-front were inscribed with the names of all the articles which I deal in, it would cover the whole window.

Serjeant Probyn. There is no occasion for anything of that sort. The nature of your business is not indicated sufficiently by the words herbalist and seedsman, and it is probably in consequence of that defect that the police were so far misled as not to visit you when the inquiries into the death of the late Miss Carrington were first set on foot. Enough of that, however. I wish to inquire, next, how it happens that you have not come forward earlier with your evidence?

Witness. Because, till yesterday, I had never heard of the case.

Serjeant Probyn. Come, come, Mr. Vampi. This will scarcely do. Do you mean to tell the jury that this case, which has been so widely discussed, both in the newspapers and in private conversation, never attracted your attention till yesterday?

Witness. I have already said so.

Serjeant Probyn. Do you not read the newspapers, Mr. Vampi?

Witness. Very rarely, and, lately especially, I have been so occupied as to have no time for anything of the sort.

Serjeant Probyn. And your neighbours and customers have never spoken to you on the subject?

Witness. Certainly not; or if they have, not so as to attract my attention, or give me the least idea that it was anything with which I could be mixed up in any way.

Serjeant Probyn. It is a very strange thing, you must allow, Mr. Vampi, that an affair of this sort, which has been the talk of the town, should all this time have escaped you? Are you not in the habit of talking with your customers, Mr. Vampi?

Witness. My customers are generally much too full of their own wants and their own troubles, to talk to me upon other subjects. Besides, I have lately been less in the shop than usual.

Serjeant Probyn. You have been less in the shop than usual, eh? and yet you told us just now that you had been especially busy of late. How do you reconcile those two statements, Mr. Vampi?

Witness. I have said that I was busy, and I have said that I was not much in my shop. It follows, then, as your knowledge of logic will inform you, that I was busy *out* of my shop. I was at work in my study, or laboratory, as I should rather call it.

It was one of the things most dreaded by Gilbert, and the colleague who was associated with him in the defence, that the counsel for the prosecution should find out Vampi's weak side, and get any idea of the nature of those studies in which the philosopher was in the habit of engaging. There seemed rational cause to apprehend lest the jury should mistrust the evidence of a man who constructed horoscopes and dealt in the Elixir of Life. It may be conceived, then, with how much alarm Gilbert watched the turn which things were now taking. The examination went on.

Serjeant Probyn. You were at work in your study or laboratory, were you? And may I ask, Mr. Vampi, what was the nature of your undertakings? Were you inventing a new corn-plaister, or studying a patent blister?

Witness. I was doing neither of these things, sir, though a man might be worse occupied. I was engaged, however, in studies of a more exalted kind.

Gilbert's heart sunk within him as he heard that answer. He knew from his friend Lethwaite what might be expected if Cornelius was once launched on his favourite theme. Meanwhile, the cross-examination does not halt.

Serjeant Probyn. "In more exalted studies," ay, ay, ay. May I ask of what nature, Mr. Vampi? Of a material or a spiritual kind?

Witness. Of both kinds—spiritual as my studies have been of the heavenly bodies and their influence on the fortunes of my fellow-creatures—material as they have been directed to such combinations of material drugs as might tend to alleviate suffering, and bring back vitality and even youth itself to those who have declined somewhat into the vale of years.

Serjeant Probyn. Upon my word, but these are studies with a vengeance, Mr. Vampi. You are something of a magician, then?

Witness. No, an interpreter merely. Spiritually, I interpret to mankind what the stars teach me of their different fates, and physically, I combine those herbs and drugs whose properties I know, and give my fellow-creatures the benefit of the result.

It may be conceived what were Gilbert's sensations as he heard what Cornelius Vampi said. How might the value of his evidence be diminished by such folly as this? How could judge or jury be expected to believe in a witness who thus pleaded guilty to a belief in horoscopes and elixirs of youth? It was dangerous in the last degree. How terrible it was that the man should have got upon this theme. Gilbert determined that an effort should be made—and that at once—to stop the thing before it got further, and protect her whom he was defending from this new danger. The counsel for the defence rose then and submitted to the court—that this was not evidence.

There followed then the customary debating which such an objection always raises. The counsel for the prosecution contending that it was his duty to ascertain how far the witness was, or was not, a trustworthy one, and that any evidence which went to strengthen or invalidate his testimony was fit evidence to be taken in court that day and pertinent to the matter in hand. Considerable discussion followed on this assertion of Serjeant Probyn's, but the court ruled at last that the evidence in question was not evidence in this case.

The learned serjeant, nothing daunted, proceeded with his cross-examination on a new tack. Alas, everything seemed, sooner or later, to lead back to the dangerous subject. Cross-examination continued.

Serjeant Probyn. And now, Mr. Vampi, will you be kind enough to inform the court how it happened that you did *at last* come to hear of the sad story which is under investigation in this court to-day?

Witness. I heard of it at last through one of my clients.

Serjeant Probyn. "One of your clients," eh? That is a curious expression. I suppose you mean some one who consulted you?

Witness. That is my meaning.

Serjeant Probyn. Will you be good enough to tell the court the name of the individual in question.

Witness. Certainly. His name is Lethwaite—Mr. Julius Lethwaite.

Serjeant Probyn. Oh, indeed, Mr. Julius Lethwaite. (Referring to a paper.) One of the witnesses for the defence, I see. And was this gentleman a material or a spiritual client?

Witness. He came to consult me as one who was able to interpret the occult language of the oracles on high——

Again the counsel for the defence interposed, and submitted that the evidence of the witness was wandering away from the point, and again, after much discussion, the verdict of the court was on his side.

Serjeant Probyn seemed utterly unabashed by this second decision against him. He knew that the witness under examination had said enough, before he could be stopped, to show the jury something of his visionary character, and he did not despair of more of this being brought out yet, as the examination went on. For he had not done with him yet, as the next question proved.

Serjeant Probyn. You have spoken with great confidence, Mr. Vampi, of your conviction that the lady to whom you sold this laudanum and the late Miss Carrington were one and the same person. This is a matter of such importance, that I must ask you very seriously if you are perfectly convinced that this is so?

Witness. I am perfectly convinced.

Serjeant Probyn. And on what do you base that conviction?

Witness. On the testimony of my own eyes. I find that the face portrayed in this photograph is in features, expression, and every other respect, the counterpart of the countenance of that lady to whom I sold the laudanum.

Serjeant Probyn. You are aware that you are speaking on oath.

Witness. I am perfectly aware of it.

Serjeant Probyn. And that mistakes of identity are very common.

Witness. That I am also aware of.

Serjeant Probyn. I think you have mentioned that your opportunities of studying the features of deceased were not very numerous. May I ask how many times you have seen her unveiled?

Witness. I have seen her unveiled twice.

Serjeant Probyn. And do you mean to say that, on the strength of having twice seen the deceased lady's face, you will speak unhesitatingly on this, a question of her identity—and that with a portrait, too, which may give but a very imperfect idea of the deceased?

Witness. Had this been a portrait done by the hand of man, I might have been compelled to speak with greater diffidence. But the sun, sir, is a mighty artist, and we must admit that his portraits, whether they please us or not, are certainly reproductions of some phase or other of the persons who have sat for them.

Serjeant Probyn. And you consider, do you, Mr. Vampi, that those two glimpses which were permitted you of the late Miss Carrington's face, were sufficient to justify you in speaking so confidently as you do?

Witness. Most certainly. One of those "glimpses," as you call them, lasted a considerable time, and I had the opportunity of thoroughly examining the poor lady's countenance in every part.

Serjeant Probyn. And what, may I ask, was the occasion of your being permitted thus to examine the deceased lady's features?

Witness. I had asked to be allowed to do so.

Serjeant Probyn. That was rather a peculiar request, Mr. Vampi, was it not? Will you inform the court what was the occasion of your making it?

Witness. I had undertaken to make inquiry, for the poor lady's benefit, as to what her star promised for the future, and I thought that before completing her horoscope it would be well that I should see her face, and see in what respects it resembled, or differed from, the physiognomies of other persons born under the same planet. It is one of the characteristics of the art mystic——

Serjeant Probyn was obliged to interrupt the witness at this point, as he saw that if he failed to do so, the counsel for the defence would certainly interpose to prevent Cornelius from committing himself further. Surely it is not too much to say that this conflict was like some passage of arms of old, with a life at stake upon its issue.

The long cross-examination of this witness was now brought to an end.

Serjeant Probyn. I am afraid, Mr. Vampi, that the "art mystic" must be left alone for the present, however interesting it might be to hear it treated of by one so profoundly initiated in its arcana as yourself. I have now only one other question which it is necessary to ask before you leave the witness-box. It is this: How does it happen that since you sold so many bottles of laudanum at different times to the deceased lady—and in this I will remark that it seems to me that you have been greatly to blame—how does it happen, I say, that one, and one only, of these bottles has been found in her possession?

Witness. I will, with permission, answer your remark as to my being to blame in selling the laudanum to the deceased, before proceeding to reply to your other question. Laudanum is, it must be remembered, a medicine, and not merely a poison, and is quite easy to obtain at the different chemists' shops, where it would be very difficult, if not impossible, to purchase such drugs as are simply poisons, and nothing else. It is not by any means the custom to surround the purchase of opium with difficulties and restrictions, and the order which I have already alluded to, signed by a medical man, was quite sufficient, as it appears to me, to justify my selling laudanum to the bearer of it. As to the question concerning the bottles, it is soon answered; the lady was in the habit of returning my empty bottles to me whenever she came for a fresh supply, not wishing, probably, to have them accumulating on her hands. The bottle produced in court must have been the last which she received from me, and which, unhappily, she was never able to bring back.

With this Cornelius Vampi's evidence came to an end, and he was at length allowed to retire from the witness-box. There was no one in court who could fail to be struck by the strange mixture of common sense with delusion which had been revealed in the course of Vampi's evidence. On all practical points what he had said had been so straightforward and to the purpose, and yet let the slightest chance be given him of mounting his favourite hobby, and he was ready for the wildest and most preposterous excursions upon its back forthwith. Upon the whole, that cross-examination, however, had been but little injurious to the cause of our poor prisoner. The astrologer had stuck to all his points immovable. On that question of the identity of the deceased lady with the unknown to whom he had sold the laudanum, he was firm, as also with regard to the exact date when her visits to him had ceased, and these, after all, were the really important parts of his evidence. To say that it was listened to throughout with profound attention, is to give but a feeble idea of the extreme interest which every word he said excited in the minds of his audience. Had the case under trial been in the least degree a less serious one, and had the issue of the trial itself been less than a question of life and death, a considerable amount of amusement would have been felt by all present at the grotesque way in which that forbidden subject, in which Cornelius took such delight, kept reappearing in his evidence, and at the evident mortification experienced by the philosopher when he was prevented from enlarging upon it.

To Gabrielle, as has been said, all that Vampi had to say was matter of an entirely new as well as a most momentous kind. It solved that mystery—a mystery as much to her as to others—

as to who it was that had really administered that poison to the dead lady. She could not but feel, ignorant as she was of all things connected with the law, that it was on this man's statement, on its consistency and credibility, that her fate hinged. Her common sense told her this, and so she listened to every word of that evidence with an attention that did not wander.

The trial was a long one, and, though near its end, could not be completed on the day of its commencement. It was getting dark, too, the days being now very short, and it was agreed that what yet remained to be got through must be postponed till next day.

Another night of bitter suspense for Gabrielle and for her husband. Only one more, it is true, for next morning all must be decided. Still that one was terrible. The excitement about the court and its purlieus, and indeed through all the town, on the evening of this day, was very great. The evening papers were sought after eagerly, though they had of necessity gone to press before the business of the day was over; still they had something to tell, and they were quickly bought up. And then there were rumours—rumours of great dissensions existing among the jury; that one of them had said that he would starve before he would convict that innocent young creature, and that another had affirmed that there were points against her which he could not get over—rumours that the old judge had told some one that he felt as if it were one of his own daughters standing there before him, and that his heart ached for the young lady—rumours that Cornelius Vampi, the astrologer, had vowed that if the verdict went against her, the prisoner, he would surely destroy himself, as having helped, by selling the laudanum, to bring about the dreadful result.

And so all had to remain in suspense, till the coming day should make the end known to them.

CHAPTER XXXV. LAST STAGE BUT ONE.

The morning dawned bright and clear upon the day that was to decide the fate of Gabrielle Penmore—the day that was to see her branded as a murderess, and consigned to the condemned cell, or led forth into the sunlight, almost with the crown of martyrdom upon her head; not only without a stain upon her character, but free from the very faintest shadow of a suspicion even, as pure from any such thing as a newly born infant. One of these two things must result from that day's inquiry. There was no middle course. The sun had never risen upon a day fraught with a more momentous issue, nor had any inquiry ever been entered on in a court of law on which a more important question hinged. Life or death. Honour or shame.

The two principal actors in this tremendous drama—for the husband was included with the wife in the powerful interest which the trial had awakened in the public mind—both showed many symptoms of the wearing condition of anxiety in which the previous night had been spent. Both appeared to be thoroughly worn out, and it was very evident that there had been little or no rest for either of them during the dark hours which had intervened since they appeared in court on the day before. A curious observer might even have thought that there was something of a change for the worse visible in the looks of others besides these two, and that the judges, the jury, and even the spectators themselves, wore a kind of haggard look, more than had been observable yesterday.

The work still left to be done now, was not to be compared in quantity to what had been got through on the previous day. There were two or three witnesses only to be examined and cross-examined, after which would come the prosecutor's reply on the defence, the judge's summing up, and—the verdict.

The trial commenced on this second day with the recal of some of the witnesses who had given evidence on the previous day, in order that they might be re-examined on certain points. Cornelius Vampi was thus recalled, that he might testify to the strong animus shown towards the prisoner by Jane Cantanker, first, when she had applied to him for a charm which might ensure the ruin of the accused, and secondly, when he had met her, as has been already described, triumphing in the captivity of the accused, outside the jail of Newgate. The doctor was also re-examined as to the exact amount of laudanum found in the body of the deceased, but no additional facts of any sort of importance were at this time elicited.

The first new witness called at this time was old Smaggsdale, who came up to corroborate the evidence of his master as to the identity of the lady who paid such frequent visits to the herbalist's shop with the original of the portrait which Vampi had already sworn to. Every effort was made to shake the testimony of this witness, and he was especially asked in cross-examination how he could speak confidently on this question when the lady had always been so closely veiled. Old Smagg, however, stuck to his point. On one of the two occasions on which the deceased had unveiled herself to the philosopher, Smaggsdale had been present. He was also able to swear to the lady's bag, which was produced.

Julius Lethwaite was next called. His evidence bore on the discovery of that bottle, at whose finding the reader has assisted. The greatest interest was manifested by all present as he told that tale which we know already. The bottle which had been identified by Cornelius Vampi was now sworn to by Lethwaite as the phial which he had seen in the escritoire belonging to the late Miss Carrington. The evidence of this witness was felt to be of such extreme importance, that some attempt was made by the prosecution to detract, if possible, from the value of his testimony. The case was assuming a new aspect since these final witnesses for the defence had appeared.

Mr. Pry rose then to cross-examine this last witness.

Mr. Pry. You are acquainted personally with

the prisoner, I believe. Are you not, Mr. Lethwaite?

Witness. Yes, I am proud to say I am.

Mr. Pry. Just so. You would be glad, no doubt, to say what might exercise a favourable influence on her case?

This question was at once objected to on the part of the defence, and it was ruled that the witness need make no answer to it; so Mr. Pry had to begin again.

Mr. Pry. Will you allow me to ask you what you *are*, Mr. Lethwaite?

Witness (after considerable hesitation, during which he had in vain sought for a satisfactory way of expressing himself). I am a drummer. [Some degree of amusement excited among the audience by this answer, all expression of which was instantly suppressed.]

Mr. Pry. "A drummer!" Will you have the kindness to explain to the jury what you mean by that, Mr. Lethwaite?

Witness. I mean, that I play on the drums in an orchestra.

Mr. Pry. Do you mean to say that you get your living in that way?

Witness. Yes, at present I do in a great degree.

Mr. Pry. "At present." Then it is fair to presume that this—this—drumming has not always furnished you with a means of subsistence? May I ask what other pursuits you may have engaged in?

Witness. I have previously been engaged in commercial pursuits.

Mr. Pry. Oh, indeed; from commerce to drumming; "from grave to gay." Quite a remarkable transition. [About this time the learned gentleman, beginning to perceive that the line he was adopting was looked upon as being somewhat irrelevant to the case, and that he was likely to be again interrupted, adroitly passed to another field of inquiry.] But we will not occupy ourselves any longer with the very remarkable and incongruous professional pursuits in which you have first and last been engaged. We will, I say, let that matter drop, Mr. Lethwaite, and I will next inquire how you came to be acquainted with a certain Mr. Cornelius Vampi, who was recently examined as a witness for the defence?

Witness (after some hesitation). I had heard him spoken of a good deal, and I went to—to consult him.

Mr. Pry. Oh, indeed. To consult him as a chemist, I presume?

Witness. No, not precisely as a chemist.

Mr. Pry. Then I suppose it was in his capacity as a fortune-teller or astrologer that you consulted him?

Witness (doggedly). Yes, it was.

Mr. Pry. You are a believer in magic, then, Mr. Lethwaite? You live in the nineteenth century, in an age of electric telegraphs and railroads, an age when superstitions of all kinds are vanishing before the advancing light of science, and you are still a believer in magic?

Witness. I did not say so?

Mr. Pry. You did not say so, but you implied as much by stating that you had consulted this Mr. Vampi in his capacity as a soothsayer.

Witness. Yes; but I did not say that I believed in all his predictions.

Mr. Pry. That, I say, was implied. Why else should you have consulted him?

Witness. I might have consulted him out of curiosity.

Mr. Pry. Come, come, Mr. Lethwaite, that will hardly do. Do you believe in this Mr. Vampi's pretensions, or do you not? Are you prepared to admit that you—living in this great and glorious age, one of whose leading characteristics is the general diffusion of light and knowledge—that you, I say, can go backward so far as to place any confidence in those occult arts which even the most grossly superstitious among men have ceased to believe in, and which only the most ignorant and contemptible of mankind now think of practising?

The cross-examination was once more interrupted at this point. This discussion was an interruption. It was irrelevant, not connected with the matter in hand. The cross-examination must be confined to points of evidence bearing on the case, or be discontinued altogether. Mr. Pry was obliged, then, to be satisfied with what he had already extracted from this witness in connexion with his belief in the secret sciences, and to go on to something else, as thus:

Mr. Pry. I will now tax your memory on another point, Mr. Lethwaite. Did you not, on the twenty-seventh of January last, receive an intimation from the prisoner that the rooms then occupied by Miss Carrington would be vacant on the following day?

Witness. I am not quite sure of the date, but I did receive such an intimation about the time you mention.

Mr. Pry. And did you act upon it?

Witness. Yes I did.

Mr. Pry. And did you take possession of the rooms upon that occasion?

Witness. No, they were not available for the purpose.

Mr. Pry. And why not, may I ask?

Witness. Miss Carrington had died in the mean time most unexpectedly, and her remains were not at that time removed.

Mr. Pry. Exactly so. It would appear that the prisoner had calculated on the death of the deceased lady, otherwise she would not have suggested that another occupant should succeed to the possession of her rooms.

Witness. Hardly so. The accused had reason to expect that the unfortunate Miss Carrington would go away on the day in question. Had the accused known that Miss Carrington was to die, she would also have known that the rooms would not be vacant, it not being the custom in this country to remove the body from a house on the day succeeding that on which the decease takes place.

There was a great pause after this answer had been given. It was felt on all sides that the junior counsel for the prosecution had made a

mistake in his last question, and that the answer of the witness was an answer which told very strongly in favour of the defence. It is probable that Mr. Pry felt this to be the case himself. At all events, he did not ask any more questions, and intimated to Mr. Lethwaite that he might leave the box, a permission of which that gentleman was not slow to avail himself. He had done what he could to serve his friend. His examination was followed by that of Jonathan Goodrich, who simply corroborated in all points the evidence as to the finding of the laudanum bottle which had just been given by the last witness. He was not cross-examined, and, upon his retirement from the witness-box, Gilbert Penmore rose once more and announced that—

The defence was now complete.

The prosecution and the defence had each of them now put the facts of the case, as they bore in favour of each, before the jury. The evidence on which the great decision was to rest had all been given. According to time-honoured custom, it was now the privilege of the prosecutor to make a sort of answer to the arguments put forward by the defence. This, no doubt, is only fair. The prosecution, having to open the case, cannot know at the beginning what line the counsel for the defence will take, and this might give the last, if left with the last word, an undue advantage. Also, supposing him to have put forward any unsound statement likely to exercise undue influence with the jury, here is an opportunity for the prosecutor to expose it, and to counteract such statement by his own arguments. The reply of the prosecution is seldom a long one. It is one of the final stages of a trial, and is a signal to all men that the end is approaching.

It was small wonder that at this time the long and painful suspense endured by Gabrielle Penmore should have begun to tell upon her. Her strength was fairly undermined. That old judge, who had had so much sad experience of such scenes as these, had not failed to observe a strange sort of restlessness which had come over her. The fatigue which she had undergone had quite gone beyond her powers of endurance, and at times she seemed to waver on her seat, as if she would fall. The old man whispered something to an attendant, and the proceedings were suspended, while the prisoner was removed for a time into the open air, and strengthened for what was yet to come with restoratives. It was noticed by many how the young advocate for the defence, in his place among the barristers' benches, was suffering also at this time, and what frequent disturbed glances he directed at this bitter moment towards the dock behind him.

The witnesses who had been called for the defence had changed the aspect of the case before the jury in a manner which no one had anticipated, and the prosecution had, as we have seen already, sought to shake the testimony of those witnesses in cross-examination, or, failing that, to make them out untrustworthy, fanciful—such persons, in short, as were not to be relied on as witnesses. This was the line of argument adhered to now by Serjeant Probyn in his reply on the evidence for the defence. He would go through that evidence, he said, carefully, from beginning to end; but first he had something to say in connexion with the circumstances under which that defence had been presented before the jury, to which he begged their earnest attention. The case which this jury had assembled to try was one which had excited a vast deal of sympathetic feeling. Great interest had been awakened in the public mind by the fact that the prisoner placed at the bar, with the most serious charge known in law against her, belonged to a class of life the members of which rarely appeared in the dock of the Old Bailey. The prisoner not only did not belong to the criminal classes, but was a lady of good and most respectable connexions, and was in every way calculated to awaken that feeling of interest and sympathy which, beyond a doubt, had been extended towards her by a great number of people. As if, too, to increase the strong feeling of popular excitement with which this trial had been regarded by the world outside, there was an additional element of interest imported into it of which it was the duty of the counsel for the prosecution to say something. He alluded to the close connexion which existed between the prisoner at the bar and the counsel who had undertaken to conduct her defence. The existence of that relationship was no secret, and he believed the knowledge of it had strengthened very much the desire that the defence might win the day, if he might so speak, which the learned serjeant believed had possession of most persons who were present in court that day. He entreated the jury to put all such considerations away from their minds, and to regard, in coming to their decision, the interests of justice, and of justice only. The evidence which had been put before them was what they had to do with, and that alone. The evidence and the degree of confidence with which that evidence was to be regarded; and here there did appear to be some ground for hesitation. A great question remained to be decided on by the jury. How far were those witnesses, who had given such remarkable testimony in favour of the line of defence adopted by his learned friend, worthy of trust and belief? The principal witness, on whose evidence, indeed, the whole defence rested—did it appear to the jury that this was a man on whom, in a question of such importance as the present one, implicit reliance could be placed? He was a wild, visionary character. He was professedly an astrologer and fortune-teller, one who believed in, and practised, what were called the occult arts. What such a person spoke of as facts might be in reality nothing but dreams, the fancies of an imagination disordered by long and wilful indulgence.

This was the line adopted by the learned serjeant. He went through all the evidence that had been given, and tried to weaken its effect by depreciating those who had given it. What sort of witness, he would ask, was a pro-

fessed astrologer and fortune-teller? Was that the kind of man in whose testimony any confidence could be placed? Then, with regard to the question of identity, was the evidence satisfactory as to that particular? By his own account, this Mr. Vampi—the very name had something unreliable about it—this Mr. Vampi had only seen the face of the deceased on two occasions, and yet he professes to speak with confidence of his power of pronouncing decidedly that the lady of whom he had thus caught two cursory glimpses, and the original of the portrait shown to him in court, were one and the same person. And in a case of such importance as this, was it right to trust so much to a thing like a portrait? There was always a degree of uncertainty attaching to likenesses, even when executed by the photographic process. Were not people continually in doubt about such portraits as to who they were meant for? Was it not a common thing to hear people say, in speaking of such likenesses, "Well, I should never have known it, if you had not told me."

Thus he went on. He spoke of the uncertainty which must attend any attempt to identify such a thing as a medicine bottle, the very labels on which might have been affixed after the bottle was found. And then he adverted to the extreme improbability of the statement made by the defence that the witness Vampi had remained for so long a time in ignorance of facts so widely known and so openly discussed as those which were connected with the present case. He confessed that he found a difficulty, which he could not help thinking that the jury would share, in receiving such a statement as this. The case for the defence was supported, there could be no doubt, by some very strange witnesses. The jury had received a mixed testimony, supported by a nineteenth-century astrologer, and a gentleman who lived by playing on the drum. It was not often that representatives of these two uncommon professions appeared in a court of justice.

In short, the learned serjeant did, as has been said, all that he could to depreciate the witnesses for the defence, and to invalidate their testimony. A strong proof of the value which that testimony bore in his eyes. *It* was impregnable, and he must, therefore, seek to throw doubt on the characters of those from whom it had come.

Another of the sections into which a trial is divided, got over. The end is drawing near now, in very truth. This reply of the prosecution is the last stage but one. Gilbert, who has listened breathless to every word of that speech, which has here been condensed to the utmost, would like to answer it again, did the arrangements of our courts of justice permit. But they do not, and he is obliged to content himself with the thought that, at any rate, it *will* be answered now by the next speaker, and that with such wisdom and discretion as can only come from a lifetime given to the consideration of questions such as these. For the next speaker is the judge, and on what he says all will depend.

There is, as has been said, no function fulfilled by man upon this earth which partakes so much of the Divine as this that the judge executes, and now the moment had arrived when this function was to be exercised under circumstances of the extremest impressiveness. There was no need to enforce silence now. The scales were adjusted, and the evidence given was about to be weighed in them. Which way would the balance turn? Men hoped, and believed that they knew; but there was a doubt still. And so all leant forward with indescribable eagerness to catch even the first few words of the judge's speech, which were uttered in low faint tones, but audible because of the intensity of the silence.

For those words on which a human life depends, and on which the whole interest of this drama in some sort hinges, it is needful, owing to the exigencies of the present form of publication, that the reader should wait just one week more. At the expiration of that time, however, he shall most certainly know, not only what is the issue of this trial, but also the end of all things connected in any way with the course of this narrative.

DEAR MEAT AND CHEAP FISH.

The present scarcity and consequent high price of animal food is most alarming. As there is but little probability of its becoming cheaper, it behoves us to look about for means to add to the general stock.

Various attempts have been made, by acclimatisation societies and by individuals, to introduce new varieties of animals; but all these well-meant attempts have hitherto failed. It is indeed a very doubtful matter whether any known animals, either domesticated or in a semi-wild state, are better than those we already have; besides, it is obvious that our pasturage, being limited and fully occupied, we cannot introduce any new variety without displacing or driving out something we already possess. It would be better, therefore, to turn our attention to the animals we already have, and to try to improve them, or in some way increase their numbers.

The land being pretty well stocked, there is but little to be done in that direction. Our fresh-water lakes and our rivers are also limited in extent; something, however, might be done here, by cultivating trout, rather than the coarser kinds of fish; but not much. Their value is estimated rather as a means of relaxation and sport than as a means of supplying food, and as such, no doubt, they might, by cultivation, become very valuable.

There is, however, one most valuable fish, whose fecundity is enormous, whose feeding-ground is unlimited, which is under our complete control during three-fourths of its existence, and which is at the same time utterly uncultivated—this fish is the salmon.

The experiments at Stormontfield are nothing more than experiments, though so important that, but for them, we should know little or nothing of the habits of the salmon. Up to

1853, when this great experiment was commenced, so profoundly ignorant were we of the habits and natural history of this valuable fish, that not half a dozen people in the whole kingdom could recognise a young salmon when they saw it. This ignorance was rendered the more amazing by the fact of their being under our control and observation during the first two years of their existence.

We have said that salmon has never, with the exception of the Stormontfield experiments, been protected or cultivated. It is true that hundreds of acts of parliament have been passed, ostensibly for its protection, but really and truly for its destruction. They have all one common origin in the quarrels and squabbles of the various proprietors of the fisheries as to who should catch the most fish. There are two clauses invariably inserted in all these acts: one, to the effect that you must not kill salmon while they are laying their eggs; the other, that you must not use a net the meshes of which are less than two inches from knot to knot. The first of these is but a negative good, and the latter is a positive evil; no further protective law has been made. From the time the young fish rises from the egg, till it puts on its migratory dress—a period extending from one to two years—it is never so much as mentioned.

During the months of May and June, shoals of little silvery fish were seen to descend our rivers towards the sea; these were rightly supposed to be salmon fry, and a few feeble attempts were made to prevent boys from catching them; but where these young fish came from, neither our naturalists, nor the more important "oldest fisherman on the river," had the most remote idea; the general opinion was that they had sprung from ova deposited in the previous November. It was little dreamed that these fish had for a couple of years, furnished food for a hundred voracious animals, and afforded sport for all the boys in the neighbourhood.

In order to arrive at an approximate knowledge of the destruction of salmon fry, we had better select some one particular river. The Tay is perhaps the most suitable, it being not only our best, but also, under the able management of Mr. Buist, the best cared for of all our salmon fisheries.

The number of salmon and grilse taken yearly in this river, is, in round numbers, eighty thousand, and the number that passes up for breeding purposes during close time—that is, the five months when no salmon can be legally taken—is supposed to be forty thousand. Of these forty thousand, one-half are females, and the average weight of each fish is upwards of ten pounds. It is known that a salmon deposits a thousand eggs for every pound of its weight; it follows that each of these twenty thousand female fish will deposit ten thousand eggs; and that $20{,}000 \times 10{,}000 = 200{,}000{,}000$, that is, two hundred millions of eggs are deposited annually in the bed of this one river! The melancholy result of this prodigious number of eggs, is eighty thousand fish, or about five salmon or grilse from ten thousand eggs, the produce of each pair of fish.

Is there no remedy for this extraordinary state of things? We think there is; there are two methods, both of which should be conducted simultaneously. One by protecting the fry in the river; and the other by artificial cultivation.

When a gamekeeper is placed on an estate for the purpose of raising a large stock of game, the first thing he does is to look for marks or signs of vermin—he calls everything vermin that isn't game—but polecats, stoats, weasels, house-cats run wild, hawks, crows, and the like, are his great aversion. He sets to work at once to trap, shoot, and otherwise destroy them by every means at command, for he well knows from experience that an attempt to raise game on land infested with vermin, would be as futile as an attempt to raise sheep in a country overrun by wolves. This trapping of vermin never ceases; it is almost the whole and sole business of the gamekeeper. Should he happen to find a bird killed by vermin, he rests neither day nor night till he has trapped the depredator. Hunting human poachers is quite a secondary matter; what *they* kill is a mere matter of moonshine compared to the mischief done by vermin; the poacher kills game only when fit for the table, but vermin is never at rest night nor day from one year's end to the other. One pair of stoats will do more mischief than a dozen poachers, and three or four house-cats run wild will demolish the game on a thousand acres. The careful gamekeeper also collects all the outlying eggs—those deposited in places where they are likely to be destroyed—brings them home, hatches them, and protects the young until they can take care of themselves. We should have but a poor opinion of a gamekeeper who did nothing but kill game during seven months, and left the remnant a prey for every kind of vermin during the remaining five. And yet this is exactly the plan we follow with regard to salmon.

If we are to materially increase our supply, we must follow the plan of the gamekeeper, and *trap the vermin.*

There is a clause inserted in every salmon act to the effect that no net used in a salmon river shall have a mesh less than eight inches in circumference, or two inches from knot to knot; whatever may be left out, this clause never is; it must therefore be considered of great importance; but what is the object of it? What is it intended to do, or to leave undone? We have made every possible inquiry, and cannot get at the bottom of it, it is so very deep. It cannot be for the purpose of allowing grilse, or small salmon, to pass through, for it is quite small enough to take every one of them; a fish of two pounds weight might pass through, but we never find salmon so small in our rivers. The truth is, if a reward had been offered for the best plan for destroying our salmon fisheries, it would be impossible to have hit upon a more effective contrivance than this two-inch mesh; for the reason that it is small enough to catch

all the salmon, and at the same time large enough to allow pike, perch, and river trout—the vermin which prey on salmon fry—to escape. It is a plan for preserving vermin, and answers its purpose admirably.

Let us suppose that we have a river with a gravelly bottom, but destitute of fish of any kind. Let us further suppose that we stock it with twelve thousand salmon ova, and then leave it to take its chance. Something like the following results would ensue. The ova would hatch in April or May: at least all thoes not destroyed by the larvæ of insects, or picked up by diving birds; very shortly, fish of prey would make their appearance, and the worst of these, in the early stages of the life of the recently hatched fry, is the common river trout; then would come perch and pike, eels, &c. These latter, by the way, are, as Mr. Willet would observe, "hard to tackle," for as they travel overland with as much facility as through water, there is no possibility of keeping them out of any place where there is anything to eat. After the different kinds of vermin have been feeding on the fry for twelve months, about one-half of the remnant of the stock would suddenly put on a silvery vestment, get together in a small shoal, and depart on their travels. They would make their way to the sea, and return—about five per cent of them—to your river in eight or ten weeks, having grown in that short space of time to the weight of six or seven pounds. It must be remarked that they would not weigh more than an ounce when they went away, and would have taken twelve months to arrive even at that weight. The remaining half would, if not devoured by their enemies, remain twelve months longer, and then proceed to sea as their brothers and sisters had done before them.

And now when they begin to return in the shape of grilse, six or seven pounds in weight, we set to work with our parliamentary net, two inches square in the mesh, and kill every grilse. And we keep on killing, until stopped by act of parliament.

If we are to increase our stock of salmon, it must be by protecting the eggs and fry. This, with the exception of the experiment at Stormontfield, has never yet been tried; and it is not difficult to see how, out of our twelve thousand ova, we can rear no more than five or six fish for the table.

Let us suppose that, instead of neglecting the fry in our river for the whole two years of their childhood, we had, from the time they were a few weeks old, commenced netting the river with a *small meshed net:* a net not more than an inch square in the mesh; suppose we had dragged it wherever a fish was likely to be, and killed everything which could not pass through this inch mesh; we could not possibly do any harm to the salmon fry, for *they* could at all times easily pass through; and everything which could not pass through, would, most certainly, *not be a young salmon, and if not a salmon, would, as certainly, be a fish which preyed upon salmon fry,* and ought to be kept out of every salmon river.

This dragging of the river should never cease, in season or out of season, while there is a head of vermin to be caught; of course avoiding the spawning-beds; there are hundreds of holes and corners where predatory fish lurk, and which are but little frequented by adult salmon. Any stray fish taken in the close time can always be returned to the river uninjured.

Small meshed nets cannot very well be used in large and heavy water, but this is of little consequence, for it is not there that we expect to meet with fry-eating vermin. These must be looked for in the breeding tributaries chiefly, especially in any eddies or dead water at their lower part, near their junction with the main river; there the deadly pike lurks and destroys thousands of smolts as they descend towards the sea. Pike of large size are seldom taken in the main river. This is easily accounted for. The main stream is netted hourly, day and night, and consequently every fish of two pounds and upwards is captured; but in the tributaries it is different; these are netted only occasionally, and at stations widely apart, when salmon are supposed to be on the run. There are long stretches of nearly still water, precisely suitable to the habits of the pike; these never have a net in them, for the reason that salmon are not likely to be taken there; as for pike, river trout, and other voracious fish, no one ever dreams of fishing for them; they are not worth taking; they bring next to nothing in the market. If a gamekeeper were to disregard the various kinds of vermin on his ground for the simple reason that he could not sell them, we should conclude he had taken leave of his senses.

Of the fish bred at Stormontfield and turned into the river, four per cent were known to be recaptured as grilse, the same season. We say *known*, advisedly, because such was the unreasoning prejudice of the fishermen against the experiment, that it was only from two or three stations that any return was made, and Mr. Buist declined to register any fish unless it actually passed through his hands. After protecting the fry for one and two years, four per cent does not appear at first sight to be a very large return; but it must be remembered that in the natural state of things only one-half of a fish is produced from one thousand ova, and allowing that half the ova used in the experiment is wasted, we still have twenty fish for each thousand ova—an increase of forty-fold. Of how many fish returned after the fishings closed, or how many may have remained in the sea to return as spring fish, we have no knowledge.

Although the instinct of the fish is sufficient at all times to continue the species, it is by no means sufficient to prevent them from making many mistakes. They often deposit their eggs in shallow water when the river is in flood; these are left dry, and perish when the water subsides. But the greatest destruction of fish, fry, and ova, takes place in the small affluents. The Almond, for instance, a mountain stream

which enters the Tay about two miles above Perth, in dry weather contains no water for the last four miles of its natural course, the water being all carried away by an artificial aqueduct —supposed to have been made by the Romans —for the supply of the town of Perth.

This river has a great extent of fine spawning-ground, and when in flood an immense number of spawning-fish make their way up it. It is of no value whatever as a fishing river; clean fish never enter it during the fishing season; it is, like many of the smaller tributaries, a purely breeding stream.

It is doubtful if any of the fish which enter this stream ever come out again alive. They are all killed, either at the mill-dams or on the shallow spawning-beds; many of them force their way into small rivulets where there is hardly sufficient water to cover them, and whence the country people hook them out. Though barely eatable, they are better than nothing. The excuse for this, as in all similar circumstances, is this: "We never see clean fish, and we must just take them when we can get them." These people can hardly be called regular poachers; they see large fish floundering about, and it is a difficult thing to persuade them that they have not as much right to them as the people living near the mouth of the river.

Why allow salmon to enter this River Almond at all? Why not erect a cruive or trap at or near its junction with the Tay, and arrest every fish, take their spawn, and hatch it in an apparatus, as at Stormontfield? Very few of them would be in a ripe spawning condition, but that is of no consequence; for Mr. Buist has proved beyond dispute that they may be kept in confinement until they are ripe. A great proportion of the fry now in the protecting ponds at Stormontfield, are the produce of this experiment. Were the plan to be adopted, there can be little doubt that more salmon than the whole of the present take of the Tay, could be raised from the fish which are now entirely wasted in this one stream.

The number of salmon any given river may be made to produce, if not unlimited, is limited only to the quantity of fry it can sustain. For, if we provide food and protection for the young fish until they emigrate—at which time they do not weigh more than an ounce—we have not only done all that we can do, but all that is necessary to be done. After that, each fish goes beyond our control, and we see it no more until it returns to us a grilse, or full-grown salmon; it requires nothing further at our hands, for it requires no food in its adult state in fresh water.

There is no greater enemy to the fry as it emerges from the spawning-bed, than the fry of the preceding year. In consequence of their cannibal-like propensity, it was found impossible to keep the broods of two different seasons in the same pond; the fry of one year devouring the brood of the succeeding year the instant it entered the pond. In order to propagate every year, there must be at least two store ponds. There are two at Stormontfield now; at first there was only one, in consequence of which the ova boxes were idle every alternate year. This is a great advantage of artificial culture—for no doubt the fish in the river have the same cannibal propensity; we can keep them and feed them till they put on their silvery vests, and go off like gentlemen to see the world.

All the tributaries which yield no clean fish, should be treated artistically, and even those which yield only a few, should not be overlooked. The River Earn, a large and important affluent, yields a rental of about four hundred pounds a year; of the number of fish which pass up it for breeding purposes, we have no knowledge, but it must be very considerable, for we once saw forty fish, averaging twenty pounds each, taken out at one haul of a net, for experimental purposes. They were none of them forward enough, and were all returned to the river. About one-half of these fish were females, and would each deposit twenty thousand eggs— $20 \times 20{,}000 = 400{,}000$. These fish were but a very small part of the breeding-fish in this river —a mere drop in the bucket—and would not have been missed had they all been destroyed; yet from the ova of these few fish, if carefully treated, four thousand pounds' worth of fish could most certainly have been raised. The river is a good deal poached in its upper part, but if it were not, there are enough pike in it to demolish the fry from forty times four hundred thousand ova. The river swarms with them, but they are never fished for; it wouldn't pay; they bring hardly anything in the market. Burglars and thieves are not generally of much value, but we do not, for that reason, allow them to go at large and prey upon the public.

The great stumbling-block in the way of salmon culture, is the divided interest of the various proprietors. What, for instance, is the inducement for the cultivation of this River Earn? The fish might be increased a hundred-fold, and would be all taken on their return from the sea by the proprietors of the fisheries between the sea and the junction of the Earn with the Tay. No good can be done until all the proprietors form themselves into a joint-stock company, and this could not be effected without an act of parliament; for there would be some selfish individuals who would not join, in the hope of reaping the benefit of the labour of others.

We cannot quit the subject without alluding to the stake and bag-nets used for the capture of salmon on the sea-coast. It can be of little consequence to the consumer where or how the fish are taken, if only they are sent to market in their best condition. As to the proprietors themselves, the less the cost of catching the better for them. These matters, however, are never referred to in the numerous acts of parliament. There is only one question, and that is, to whom do they belong? and consequently who has the right of taking them? The river proprietors say, "We breed the fish; you sea-fishers have no right in them." The sea-fishers may, with equal propriety, assert that they are sea fish, and that, except in their

useless infancy, they never grow in fresh water, and the river people have no right to catch them when they seek their breeding-ground. The truth is, that so long as they are simply allowed to follow their natural instinct, they are by right the property of anybody who can catch them. It was so at one time; the right of fishing for salmon was vested in the Crown; but the Crown has thought proper to give away or sell its right to individuals and corporations.

But when the river proprietors think proper to cultivate their waters, the question assumes a different aspect; for no man has a right to appropriate to himself the labour of others. At present they are not cultivated; a few men are employed to prevent poachers from taking the breeding-fish, but nothing further is attempted. No man should be deprived of his present rights; let, therefore, these stake-net proprietors have their *present* right valued, pay them, and abolish the nets. The sea is a common, and everybody has an equal right to everything running wild upon it; but the general public can have no right to animals reared at much cost at home, and merely turned out, as it were, to graze. Unless something of this sort be done, it is absurd to expect that any improvement can take place in our salmon-fisheries. There is another great objection to these stake and bag nets in the sea; they destroy and molest the fish on their feeding-ground, and kill thousands of them before they are half grown. It is a great mistake to suppose that fish taken in the sea are better than those taken in the river. Those entering the river are in the finest possible condition, while those taken in the sea are smaller, especially the grilse, and—best proof of all—do not bring so much in the market.

MY HEART'S IN THE HIGHLANDS.

When an English excursionist crosses the border, and comes in sight of a heath-covered mountain, he is apt to think that he is in the Highlands. But Scotland is not all highlands. There is a large portion of it, which, though not without mountains, is called the Lowlands. The divisions are natural and well defined, though they are not marked out with a stone or wall, like the boundaries of a parish. The Highlands comprehend the Hebrides, the Orkney and Shetland Islands, the counties of Argyle, Inverness, Nairn, Ross, Cromarty, Sutherland, and Caithness, with parts of Dumbarton, Stirling, Perth, Forfar, Kincardine, Aberdeen, Banff, and Moray. The Lowlands comprise those portions of the country which lie on the east coast close to the sea. By the eastern route you may travel from Edinburgh to Aberdeen without setting foot in the Highlands; by the western route you may reach the granite city without setting foot in the Lowlands—or nearly so. In mentioning this geographical fact I shall not be teaching even my Scotch grandmother; for it is not every Caledonian who can say for certain when he is in the Highlands, and when he is in the Lowlands. Chasing the wild deer and following the roe, your heart may figuratively be in the Highlands wherever you go, but not actually. I have been a fortnight in Scotland, I have travelled hundreds of miles, I have climbed mountains, I have viewed cataracts, I have seen John o'Groat's House, and yet I have not once touched Highland ground.

But I "take" the Highlands on my way home. Yes; though I am greeting sair (as I knew I should) at parting from bonny Banff, I still can speak of London as "home." It is the home of the world—a dear old smoky wilderness with a thousand bright oases, where all the nationalities of the earth are free to make themselves as happy and comfortable as circumstances will permit. And, circumstances permitting, how comfortable one can be in London! Elsewhere in the world you feel that you are a stranger, even after many years; but in London you are at home the moment you have mastered the topography of its streets. In this London street where I make my home, there reside with me, on terms of neighbourly intimacy, an Irishman, a Frenchman, an American, and a Parsee (whom I have never yet caught with his calico hat off); and I find that, though born in different quarters of the globe, professing different religions, and having, in other respects, different tastes, we are all of one mind in regarding London as a familiar, congenial dwelling-place, in which we are snug, safe, and secure. The unanimity of our love for certain places has often struck me as being very remarkable. There is no sight on the face of the earth that awakens more pleasurable feelings in my breast than a glimpse of Highgate through the trees on a summer's day. My Irish neighbour has told me many a time that he loves Highgate as dearly as Limerick, his native city; and the Parsee gentleman says that he feels as if he had been born and spent his youth at Highgate, and that he would like to be buried there. We have the same sort of love and, as it were, native attachment for Hampstead, Richmond, Kew, and other sweet places, which are not for a country, but for all the world. I sometimes think that I knew and loved these places in a former state of existence. I seem to have known them before I knew the spots where I spent the young days of my present life. I am not ashamed, then, to say that, in quitting the lovely Scotch valley where I was born, and turning my face towards London, I am going "home." The wicked city, some call it. *I* call it the city of the good. Reckon with me, and I will find you, not ten, but ten thousand righteous. Don't talk to me of the virtuous peasant living a life of simplicity in secluded dales, far from the corrupting influence of towns. Give him his best Sunday-going waistcoat, embroidered with all the most innocent flowers of the valley, and I will find you a more virtuous man any day in Fleet-street—one with as true and pure a heart as ever beat, though he does live in the wicked city, and never hears the birds sing except at the Pantheon in Oxford-street, nor smells the perfume of flowers except in

Covent-garden Market. But I forget. (I take this to be an improvement upon "But I am digressing.") My heart is at present in the Highlands; my heart is not here (in London), and so I proceed at once to chase the wild deer, and follow the roe.

I leave Banff, and make my way westward by such a queer little railway! An innocent railway I should call it; a railway that wouldn't kill a fly, much less a human passenger. I believe there never was but one accident on this railway, and that was on the opening-day, when the engine, not being used to it, ran off the rails, and tumbled all the directors into the ditch. The legend goes that the directors picked themselves up, adjourned to a neighbouring and hospitable farm-house, and celebrated the auspicious occasion over several tumblers of toddy, while their anxious relatives were searching in vain among the wreck of the carriages for any trace of their mangled remains.

I am the only passenger this morning at the Banff station. Solely on my account a square box upon wheels, drawn by two horses, and known here as "*the* omnibus," has rattled up from the Fife Arms Hotel; solely on my account is the ticket-office opened; and for me and me alone do fire burn and water boil, and guard and stoker and engine-driver attend to perform their various duties. Seated in my carriage, waiting for the train to start, I overhear something like the following conversation, the interlocutors being the guard and the engine-driver: "Ony body else comin'?" "I dinna see ony body." "Weel, time's up, we maun start." "Stop a minute." "Didna ye say the druggist was ga'in' wi' us this morning?" (This to the clerk, who responds in the affirmative.) "Weel, jist rin out and see if he's coming." "Stop a minute, Geordie, here's somebody." Somebody walks in and takes his seat quite leisurely. "Ony mair coming?" "Na, nae mair that I can see." "Oh, weel, we winna wite ony langer." And the train, with two passengers in it (there would have been only one if time had been kept), moves slowly out of the station. This northern railway has many simple and innocent ways. It has only a single line of rails; the engine-driver and guard are on the most intimate terms with the passengers who come in at the stations; and, if any one desires to be set down near his place of residence, he has only to mention it to the driver, and the train will be stopped to accommodate him.

A journey of eighteen miles, which I had made many a time in my school-days on a grey sholty (pony) in a gig, in a cart, in a yellow chariot at election-time, on shanks's mare at other times, brings me to my native Grange in the strath of the Isla — a lovely valley covered with a patchwork carpet of green and gold, fringed at its upland edges with purple heather. You might imagine that there were giants on the four hills holding up the corners. The monks of old, who always had a keen eye for a good location, founded a monastery here, and divided the lands among the brethren. The farms to this day retain the names which they originally derived from their clerkly occupants. The monastery stood on a mound, partly natural, partly artificial, which is now crowned by the parish kirk. I had a belief long ago, and I am confirmed in it now, that if the mound were excavated, wonderful things would be found in it—old coins, old arms, records, treasure perhaps. The country hereabouts is rich in silent monuments of the misty days of old. There are mounds and cairns, and a lingering nomenclature pointing to ancient battle-fields, on which kings and abbots fought and fell, in what cause Heaven only knows. There are holy wells, and kings' cairns, and clerks' seats, and there is a "gallow hill" where cattle-stealers were hanged by the authority of some local potentate, who did not allow any one to rob but himself, and whose law was the law of Lynch. If the peripatetic philosophers of the British Association would condescend to visit this part of the country, I am disposed to believe they would hear of something to their advantage, something that might enable them to add a chapter or two to the very meagre chronicle of the land of the Picts and the Scots at the period of the Danish invasions, and might supply a few links to the broken chain of history, which leaves so wide a gap between the era of Episcopacy and the reconstruction which followed the Reformation. There are histories as well as sermons in the stones which lie about here, marking the graves of kings and chieftains; and kirk sessions' papers, stowed away in dark caverns under pulpit and lectern, are filled with records of Presbyterian tyranny as absolute, as ruthless, and as inexorable as that of the Papacy itself in the worst days of the Inquisition.

By reference to one of my pocket companions, the Journey to the Hebrides, I find that I am following as nearly as possible the route by which Dr. Johnson travelled. But it is not a desire to tread in the sacred footsteps of the great lexicographer—much as I am awed by a vision of his burly figure haunting the old turnpikes—that shapes my course in this particular direction. It is the railway that takes me this way, leaving me no choice unless I prefer the medium of locomotion which left no choice whatever to Dr. Johnson—a gig. The doctor says that he came to Elgin about noon. In that case he must have left Banff very early indeed, for I, travelling by rail, did not come to Elgin until past noon. The doctor complains that in the best inn's best room he had a dinner which he could not eat. Remembering this, I was almost ashamed to sit down to hare-soup, and haunch of heather-fed mutton, and grouse-pie, and all sorts of nice things. And after dinner I did precisely what the doctor did, and what every visitor has done any time these two hundred years, and what visitors will probably do for a hundred years to come—I went to see the ruins of the Cathedral. These ruins are Elgin's lion par excellence, the one that roars loudest of all. A native will scarcely let a stranger rest until he has shown him the Cathedral. I am conducted over the grand old ruin

by a gentleman whose father was a young man when Dr. Johnson visited the place. I shake hands with him, he shook hands with his father, his father may have shaken hands with Dr. Johnson, which enables me to think that I myself have *almost* shaken hands with Dr. Johnson. I hear the same guide's story that the doctor heard; how, after the Reformation, an order was issued directing the lead, which covered the roof, to be taken away and converted into money for the use of the army, and how the vessel in which "the cargo of sacrilege" (so says Dr. Johnson) was shipped for Holland, foundered at sea, and was lost with the lead and all hands.

Elgin was a small place in Dr. Johnson's time; but it is a busy bustling town now, with an extensive suburb of substantial mansions and neat villas, most of them embowered in luxuriant gardens blooming with flowers and teeming with fruit. It is the Cheltenham of the north.

After partaking of toddy from an ancestral tumbler—I wonder how many hogsheads of toddy that crystal goblet has held!—I return to the train, and in less than half an hour plunge into the Highlands. It was shortly after he left Elgin that Dr. Johnson made this entry in his diary: "Here I first heard the Erse language." I had heard the Erse language before: but it was "here" that I first heard it on this journey. It was not spoken; it was sung. The voice proceeded from a third-class carriage in my rear. By-and-by the strains were in front, and, as station after station was passed, the voice receded, and then came nearer again, which puzzled me not a little at first, but eventually explained itself in this way:—A favourite singer of Erse romances was in the train, and he was passing from carriage to carriage to give the third-class passengers a taste of his quality. As the Erse minstrel could not come to me, I went to him, and found him in the midst of a score of his fellows—apparently fishermen—singing as if for his life, while his auditors listened with open mouths and intense admiration. He sang song after song with a short dry cough at the end of each line, as a sort of vocal comma; and as his audience never laughed, but preserved the most stolid gravity, I presumed that the lyrics were Homeric rather than Anacreontic. I must say that I felt rather ashamed, being a Scot born on the borders of the Highlands, to think that I did not understand a single word he sung. I thought to make some amends to myself by trying the Highlander with English; but that experiment only made the matter worse, for he not only understood English, but spoke it with remarkable accuracy. The popular idea in England is, that all Highlanders are red-headed. There were at least a hundred Highlanders in this train, and I did not notice more than three who were positively red. The majority of them were coal-black; and not one of them wore a kilt! The Erse language, when sung, sounds like German, and the native manner of singing is like the French. I bring an English lady in to see real Highlanders—she has only seen stage and snuff-shop-door specimens—and they stare at her so with their black eyes that she is seized with a distracting thought of the fate of poor Mr. Briggs, and escapes on the first opportunity. When the minstrel departs, I find that there is no Highlander left who can speak English. I cannot, therefore, make myself understood, until the happy thought occurs to me to express myself in whisky, when they all by a marvellous inspiration of intelligence comprehend me on the instant. My experience of life in all quarters of the globe leads me to believe that liquor is the language of the world.

Most appropriately the shades of night were falling upon the scene when the train, with a horrid scream, belching forth fire and smoke, rushed across the blasted heath near Fores. I really think the stoker got up the effect on purpose. The heath-scene was better and more blasted than it had ever appeared to me on the stage. It was vaster, and the illusion was not destroyed by a proscenium of red curtain and tassel; and certainly a pot, three hags, and a gentleman in a kilt would have cut but a poor figure on so wide an expanse of heath. There is something to be said for the boards after all. Yet the boards do not consecrate scenes and events as history consecrates them. This figment of the great poet's brain, grand as it is, familiar as it is to the whole civilised world, does not affect me with the touch of nature which awakes my heart's strings presently when I am whirled along the outskirts of the field of Culloden. I do not see the witches stirring the caldron. I do not hear Macbeth asking them what it is they do; but I *do* see bonny Prince Charlie and his faithful Highlanders flying from the lost field, and I can hear the thunder of Cumberland's cannon in the distance; and the wind comes moaning to the shuddering rocks of the Firth with the burden of the sad wail, "Wae's me for Prince Charlie." Once more I want to flourish a claymore, and ask "Wha wadna follow thee, king of the Heelan' hearts?" As I look out at the carriage window, and peer through the darkness at some copse of furze or cluster of whin-bushes, my heart is in my mouth lest he should be hiding there, and Cumberland's men should come and find him. Every sound is sadly burdened with the name of Charlie. The receding sea murmurs his name, and stretches forth its white arms to enfold him in one last parting embrace; the wind moans for him, the stars are pale with fear for him, the sky drops big tears, all nature wails with the cry of Charlie, Charlie, Charlie!

The blasted heath, consecrated by Shakespeare, does not affect me; but Culloden Moor moves me deeply. Yet, as I have said, my understanding rejects Charlie, while it certainly does not reject Shakespeare. A case of the flame of patriotism burning more fiercely than the flame of poesy.

I slept at Inverness in a gaunt unpapered room in the new wing of a huge barrack, by

courtesy called an hotel. All night long, the Duke of Cumberland, in a red coat, with a redder face, sat on the foot of my bed, and wrote orders of execution on the backs of playing-cards. I noticed that every card was the nine of diamonds, which, as you are aware, is known as the Curse of Scotland.

Inverness, the capital of the Highlands, over the hills and far away from the accepted centres of civilisation, is a town well calculated to astonish the weak minds of those English excursionists who approach Scotland with misgivings lest they should not find food fit to eat, a bed fit to lie in, or a roof capable of keeping out the weather. There is a street as fine as Regent-street, with plate-glass windows a story high; there are banks so architecturally splendid, that I am sure they would, in that respect, disdain to call the Old Lady in Threadneedle-street their thirteenth cousin; there is a tartan warehouse, which combines the extensiveness of Cannon-street with the gorgeousness of Stamboul; there are hotels nearly as big as the Grosvenor and the Langham, but infinitely superior, inasmuch as their accommodation is of a lower class, and their charges are higher.

But to my mind the lion of Inverness is the tartan warehouse of one Mr. M'Dougall. Such a large and varied assortment of soft pretty things I never saw before. And so temptingly laid out! Plaids, scarves, kilts, cloaks, heather-wool jackets daintily shaped and daintily lined for dainty figures, ribbons, hose, cairngorm-hilted dirks and skeans—a gathering of all the tartans of all the clans. I was obliged to tear myself away, for fear I might not leave myself money enough to carry me back to London. I was told, however, that tartan is going out of fashion. The "garb of old Gaul," too, is going out of fashion even in Inverness. I saw only one kilt, and that was worn by the hotel-gillie. A mighty Scottish chief with an historical name, a Mac of that ilk, the definite article of his clan, came down from the hills to meet the canal-boat at one of the stations, and that Scottish chieftain wore knickerbockers! At one period the kilt was a defiance to the Saxon, and a protest against Geordie's occupancy of Charlie's chair; but that feeling was buried long ago, and a Scotchman may now wear breeks with a loyal conscience.

I am following now the beaten track of the excursionists and tourists. Oban has been called the Charing-cross of the Highlands. Inverness may, on the same principle, be called the Angel at Islington of the Highlands, Fort Augustus the King's-cross, and Fort St. George the Regent's-circus. It is a pleasant two days' journey through canal and lake, now walking along the banks while the steamer ascends the locks, now driving for a short distance by coach, and then again turning aside to view some waterfall or glen; but it is not the best way to see the Highlands, and to be fully impressed with the grandeur of the scenery. Your attention is distracted between men and mountains, between "far-folding mists" and the steam of the pots on the galley-fire, between Ben Nevis and the flavour of his dew which comes up the cabin stairs. I for one am willing to confess that where there are a man and a mountain, I prefer the man.

The proper study of mankind is man.

I see Dr. Johnson and Mr. James Boswell jogging along upon two Highland ponies, communing with nature undisturbed by those applications of modern art and science, which, while they overcome difficulties of locomotion, are destructive of the higher sentiments which grand and romantic scenery is calculated to inspire in the human breast. These breezy lakes, those stark shuddering rocks, yonder towering mountains lifting their heads above the mists to the blue heavens, the grim ruins of ancient castles—all these are very fine, very grand, but to me they would not be half so interesting if my fancy did not associate them with the warlike chiefs and clansmen of old. On the loch I see the chieftain's boat, on the hills I see the gleam of steel, and the wind comes to me laden with the sound of the pibroch. And no small share of my pleasure I derive from that ever-present vision of Dr. Johnson jogging along on his pony.

But there is too much eating and drinking going on to leave my soul quite open to the influence of fine thoughts. If I could get rid of the steam-boat, and the venison-pies, and the eternal odour of toddy, I dare say I could lie upon my back among the birch-trees yonder and poetise about Ben Nevis. As it is, I am wondering where Long John's distillery is. The only kilted persons I saw between Inverness and Oban were a Scotch-African mighty hunter, who makes a show of his skins and other trophies at Fort Augustus, and a blind white-bearded beggar. I would not dress up and walk about in broad day like this hunter for a thousand pounds. At Oban I saw nothing remarkable, except an unconscionable hotel bill, and a tame seagull that fought a dog and came down to the boat to beg for biscuit. There was nothing in Oban that I should have cared to bring away but that bird. If I go there again, I shall inquire for him. Meantime, here's to his health and his family's, and may he live long and prosper. The Crinan Canal is quite a "sensation." It is not so wide as the canal that runs through Regent's Park, London, and the barge, which just fits it (but not without causing the dish to overflow), is dragged along at a gallop by two horses ridden by post-boys in red jackets. For fully three miles a flock of little barefooted children kept pace with us on the bank, and called to us to "heave oot." The excursionists threw them halfpence, and they scrambled for them, and sometimes fell into the water. Some of the urchins were certainly not more than six years old, yet they ran for the whole course without stopping, except to scramble for the money, and they did not seem in the slightest degree distressed. It was, I heard, their daily occupation to attend upon two boats.

Let me recommend their case to the attention of the Scottish gentleman who recently distributed to his countrymen two tons of tracts.

Finally, I get on board the Iona: a floating village, with lower decks, and middle decks, and upper decks, and still an attic deck above those—the finest, most commodious, and best-appointed smooth-water passenger-boat I have ever seen. A splendid dining-room, a splendid drawing-room, a library and writing-room, a fruit-stall, a book and newspaper-stall, and a post-office! And so, up the broad bosom of the Clyde to Glasgow, where on the quay thousands of working men, with their hands in their pockets, are loitering to see us arrive. Why? Because they have nothing better to do on their Saturday half-holiday, there being no trains on the morrow to bring them back to their toil, if they should choose on this Saturday evening to make a restorative visit to the green fields.

TO PUERTO CABELLO.

Having made up my mind to see Valencia, I resolved to go from Carácas by the hot sea-route, recruit in the moderate climate of Valencia, and return by Aráguas, along the shores of the celebrated Lake of Tacarigua. When I had selected my route, and persuaded my friend C. to be my companion, at least as far as Puerto Cabello, the next thing was to fix the day of our departure. We had just heard of a European dying of yellow fever at La Guaira, having caught the disease at Puerto Cabello, and as to the intensity of the heat, we had the evidence of our own senses, it being, in fact, the hottest and most unhealthy time of the year. However, as I was very anxious to meet the president, General Falcon, whose arrival at Valencia was expected, we determined to start immediately. In the hope of getting the ride to La Guaira over before the sun grew fierce, I rose on the 8th of August at four A.M., and walked over to C.'s house. I and he were to go by the short cut over the mountains called the Indian Path, and my servant was to follow with the impedimenta by the coach road. But the course of travel never did run smooth, and the first annoyance was, that the mules we were to ride did not come at the appointed time, and when they made their appearance, the sun had already cleared off the mists that descend at night upon Carácas from the Avila. Two very diminutive animals they were, these mules, a brown and a white one, and were both equipped with that invention of the Evil One, the South American saddle, which has a huge sharp peak rising up in front, and another in rear, so that to lift the leg over them requires the lissomness of youth, or the natural suppleness of Creole joints. My temper had been somewhat ruffled by the delay of the muleteer, and I cast rather a sour look at his mules as I asked him which I was to ride.

"Señor," said the man very civilly, "this white one is little, but he knows the road well; he is for you."

"Little but old, like the pig in the story," I muttered, as, putting my left toe into one stirrup, I carelessly threw up my right leg with the intention of seating myself on the white mule's back. But it was not for nothing that the snows of age had descended on that subtle animal, who, with all his outward solemnity, had learned more tricks than a monkey. The instant my right leg went up, he jumped back with a sudden violence that transferred my foot to his ears instead of the place intended for it, and I was sent toppling over into the arms of my tall servant, whose expansive mouth opened with a grin of exquisite enjoyment. Seeing how much he and the other servants, as also the rascal of a muleteer, relished my discomfiture, I ordered a man to stand on each side of the mule and keep his head fast, and, laying firm hold of the high pommel, made a second careful and most resolute attempt to seat myself. But the aged animal was too skilful a strategist, and the instant I threw up my leg he also threw up his hinder quarters, and that too with such agility, that so far from bestriding him I only kicked him in the stomach, and was again sent back into the arms of my servant, who this time fairly broke out into a loud laugh, in which even C. joined. I held my peace, and made several other efforts to mount the brute, but all in vain. So at last I had the Spanish saddle taken off and replaced by an English one, and then, in spite of the venerable creature's tricks, succeeded in mounting him. Once on his back, I gave him the taste of a very sharp pair of spurs, to which he responded with a series of kicks, but went on at a quick pace. We passed rapidly through the streets to the north-eastern angle of the city, and skirting the Toma, or city reservoir, we began to ascend the ancient military road over the mountains. "C.," said I, after riding for some time rather sulkily, "I shan't forgive you for letting them bring me such a troublesome brute as this." "Don't be angry, amigo mio!" replied C., who had hardly yet done laughing; "that mule is called El Bailarin, 'the dancer,' on account of his capers, and many a fellow has been spilt in trying to mount him; but when once you are on him, you are sure to like him, for he has the best paces of any animal on the road. Let me tell you, too, we shall come to places presently where you will not be sorry to have a sure-footed beast under you."

By this time the ascent was becoming very steep, and turned incessantly in a sharp zig-zag, and at every turn beautiful views broke upon us. In front, on the right hand and on the left, were the mountains, with deep precipitous ravines, in which the trees grew so thickly that no eye could spy a single glitter of the waters that brawled along beneath their branches. Behind us were the city of Carácas and the rich valley of Chacao, at the furthest end of which a mass of

light vaporous clouds were floating, while in the distance towered the mountains of Higuerota. We stopped more than once to gaze at the scenery, but our mules were so good that in thirty minutes we had gained the crest of the mountain. Here we passed the ruins of a chapel, which was thrown down by the earthquake of 1812. "What a view," said I to C., "there must have been from this spot of the falling city, of the descending rocks, and the other horrors of the earthquake!" "Why yes," replied C., "if you could have kept your feet to look, but it is my opinion that you would have been knocked down by the shock. There was one man up here at the chapel, but he did not see much, for the walls fell upon him and crushed him."

We now turned our backs on Carácas, and saw no more of it, and in another half-hour we reached a posada, a mile beyond which we turned off from the broad military road by which we had hitherto been travelling (and the making of which does the Spaniards no little credit), into the far-famed Indian Path. This winds along the mountain, at the height of some six thousand feet, through thick low woods, varied by patches of coffee plantations and other cultivations. In places there is a sheer precipice, and in others, where there is only a steep slope, some hardy adventurers have built cottages, and planted coffee and the ubiquitous yuca and plantain. Storms of wind are luckily not very common in this locality, or these huts and their owners would, perchance, go a visiting in the valley below. It happened, however, that the night before we started had been very tempestuous, and we now saw many traces of the mischief wrought by the storm. In some places we came upon long avenues made in the wood, in which the trees had been uprooted or smashed by the wind, and some had fallen so as almost to block the path, and put us to no little difficulty in passing them. However, I was determined not to dismount, having a wholesome dread of the Bailarin's capering performances on such a ticklish stage as the Indian Path. At last we came to a place where a cottage had been blown down, and the débris lay right athwart our way, and here I made up my mind to be stopped altogether. The mule, however, having more of the female than of the male nature, in that it is varium et mutabile semper, does ordinarily baffle calculation in its proceedings. My cunning old animal knowing, perhaps, that the place we were at was more than half way to La Guaira, and that, consequently, it would get its provender sooner by going on than by returning, scrambled over the ruins like a monkey.

From the place where we had turned off into the Indian Path to the ruined cottage—that is, for about four miles—we had constantly been looking over wooded ravines to Cape Blanco, and beyond that to the sea. Far to the westward, also, our eyes travelled over the Tierra Caliente, or "coast" with an horizon, which, according to Humboldt, has a radius of sixty-six miles. But our prospect to the east was cut short by the jutting of the mountain, which continually advanced with and beyond us, bold and high towards the sea. We now at last turned its flank, and, looking eastward, were repaid with a very noble view over the gorges that run down from the Silla to Macuto. The path grew narrower, and the precipice so sheer, that it seemed as if a bound would carry us, if we leaped from the mountain, over the slender strip of coast into the sea. We now began to see below us Maquetia and La Guaira, with the vessels at anchor, and so much was the distance apparently diminished by the height at which we were, that I fancied I could have thrown a stone upon the roofs of the houses.

Humboldt seems not to have gone by the Indian Path, for though he dwells very much on the beauty of the view to the west, which he prefers to that from the mountains of Mexico between Las Trancas and Xalapa, he says nothing of the eastern view over La Guaira and Macuto, which struck me as far more wonderful. The view to the west he could have seen, though not quite to such advantage as we did, from the military road: the yellow line of which we occasionally noticed, at the distance of a mile or so, cropping out from the woods below us.

It was now past eight A.M., and the heat of the sun was so fierce that the coast and the sea seemed to shimmer in its rays; but up to this point we had been quite protected by the mountain, which rose in some places nearly one thousand feet above our heads. No sooner did we turn to the east, however, but we met the sun face to face, and the encounter made me quite giddy. It was with some uneasiness that I descried, ahead of us, a place where the rain of the previous night had almost entirely washed away the path, leaving only a ledge about a foot broad. "C.," said I, "how are we to pass that place? I think I must get off, even if I should have to walk all the rest of the way in this broiling sun." "Best trust to the mule," he answered. "You may slip, but he won't, I'll bet ten to one." "It's of no use betting," I said, "when I am to be killed if I win; but I'll take your advice, and chance it on the mule; so here goes." With these words, I let my bridle drop on the mule's neck, feeling sure that if he slipped, it would be of no use trying to save him, and thinking I might do harm by holding him too tight. The animal seemed to know the danger, for he put his head down and sniffed, then walked steadily over the ledge, and was followed by C.'s mule, and then by that of the muleteer, who carried our cloaks. I was just ejaculating "All right," when the career of the latter individual was nearly brought to a close. The last bit of the ledge consisted of a great stone, which had perhaps been loosened by the successive pressure of the mules. At all events, when the last animal had got his hind legs upon it, it gave way, and down it went with a shower of earth, crashing among the bushes, until, gathering velocity, it made a huge bound into the

abyss, and we saw no more of it. As for the muleteer, it was well for him that his mule had got its fore legs firmly planted on the path beyond the ledge, and that the spurs, which in his fright he drove up to the rowels into the mule's side, were sharp, for it was only by a desperate effort that the poor beast saved itself from falling back. The fellow, though used to rough work, so lost his nerve at the narrowness of his escape, that he got off, and leaned against the rock for a minute or two, with a face which terror had blanched to a whity-brown.

"Do you know," said C., "that at this very place, which before last night's rain was three times as broad as it is now, a rather disagreeable accident once occurred. It was about eight years ago. We had made up a party to take advantage of the full moon and ride down to La Guaira at night. A Frenchman, partner in one of the houses at La Guaira, whom you may have seen there, had been persuaded to join us. He was exceedingly nervous, and rather short-sighted, and we quizzed him unmercifully as we rode along in high spirits, and with rather more champagne on board than was desirable on such an occasion. When we arrived at this place, which was even then the worst bit on the road, a cloud came over the moon, and some one called out in joke to the Frenchman, who was riding a white horse, to go first, as he would be better seen by any one coming the other way, and so a rencontre would be avoided where the path was too narrow for two riders to pass. He unfortunately took the request in earnest, and made an attempt to get first. There being a bush beside the precipice, his horse mistook it for terra firma, stepped on it, and went down like a shot. The poor Frenchman uttered a cry of horror, which was succeeded by a loud crashing among branches and a rattle of falling stones, and, after a moment's pause, by a tremendous thud, as the horse struck the rocks many feet down, and bounded off into the abyss. We stood aghast at the loss of our poor friend, but, as it was impossible even to see down the precipice, we had no alternative but to go on to La Guaira, leaving two of our number to watch at the spot where he had fallen. I was one of those who went on, and as soon as I reached the town I got together ten or a dozen men, and having procured some long ropes, set off, just as the dawn was breaking, to the precipice, intending to lower some one down to see whether there was any chance of recovering the body. What was my astonishment, on nearing the place, to hear the sound of laughter and loud talking! This levity seemed so ill timed, that I intended to remonstrate with my friends who had been left to watch. My anger, however, was soon turned into joy, for I found the laughers bending over the precipice, and addressing jokes to the bushy head of a stumpy tree which grew from the side of the mountain, some fifteen feet below the path, and in which the Frenchman had providentially alighted, while his horse had been dashed to pieces. Of course we soon pulled our friend up. We found he was unhurt, except by a few scratches, though fear had at first so paralysed him, that for a good quarter of an hour after his fall he had been unable to utter one word. Even now, at this length of time, he has not completely recovered his nerve, and will not cross the mountain, even by the coach road, on horseback."

This story took so long to tell, that we had reached the grass-grown walls of the fort of San Carlos, just above the Quebrada, which runs into La Guaira, before it was done. The sun was now terrifically hot, and we pushed on with all speed to C.'s house, which we reached at half-past nine A.M., having been about three hours in coming the whole way. My only business at La Guaira was to inspect the custom-house, of which I might now be said to be joint proprietor with the government, as my servants had assumed the collection of the export duties. On going over the building, I found the lower story divided into six long stores—which together might contain about two thousand five hundred tons of merchandise—and one square store, capable of holding as much as the other six. Perhaps five thousand tons in all could be warehoused at one time in the building, but it being the dull season, there were not above six hundred tons at the time of my visit. The timber of the custom-house is almost black, and as hard as iron, and of a kind that no insect can make any impression on. Of the three stories, the lower, as has been said, consists of warehouses. In the second, sit the accountants, whose books I examined carefully. At five P.M. I had embarked with C. on board a brig of two hundred tons, and was soon sailing with a light breeze from La Guaira to Puerto Cabello. At night, the wind fell, and I who was below, among colonies of industrious ants, fleas, and cock-roaches, all doing their best to carry me away piecemeal, passed the dark hours in wondering whether I should melt away before I was eaten up, or should be eaten up before I could melt away.

In the morning, we found ourselves sweltering in a dead calm, abreast of the mountains of Ocumare, and about twenty-six miles from Puerto Cabello. The heat went on increasing until noon, when it became so intolerable, that we could do nothing but lie down panting in our shirts, and dab our heads and hands with wet towels. The sea was like glass; I looked in vain for even a cat's-paw anywhere on its surface. Not a bird or a fish was to be seen, except one dolphin: a beautiful creature of a golden green, with silver fins and tail, which kept darting about under our bows, as if in mockery of our inability to move. The mate, a huge surly swarthy fellow, whose natural ill humour was increased by the heat, swore at the fish, and tried to kill it with the grains, but only struck off a few glittering scales, after which it sank out of harm's way. At half-past four, in spite of the sun, I went up the rigging to spy for a breeze, thinking I should hardly live over the heat of such another

twenty-four hours. My reconnoitring seemed to bring good luck, for the wind sprang up almost immediately, and we ran before it at the rate of eight or nine knots an hour, towards our destination. In a short time we were able, with our glasses, to make out the Mirador of Solano, or Castle of Puerto Cabello, which stands on a rock five hundred feet high, about a quarter of a league to the south-east of the harbour.

We now began to hug the shore, and passed first the Bay of Turiamo, nine miles east of Puerto Cabello, and then those of Patanemo and Burburata. Here the coast is lined by narrow strips of low land, covered with bushes, called the islands, on which the sea breaks very heavily. I observed that from these the coast runs in a great curve to the north-west and north, making much more of a semicircle than appears from the maps. By this curve of the coast is formed a great bay called the Golfo Triste, which lugubrious title it well deserves, the coast being, perhaps, the most unhealthy in the world. At a quarter-past seven we were rounding a spit of land which runs out about half a mile from the coast in a north-westerly direction. Having rounded the spit, at the extremity of which stands a lighthouse, extremely well built, but which has never once been used, we entered a bay between the spit and the mainland, which is thus protected from all winds on the east, north, and south, and found ourselves in the far-famed harbour of Puerto Cabello. It only required a glance to see that the port was secured from storms on the west also, partly by islands and partly by the curve of the mainland. In short, there is perhaps no harbour in the world where the sea is at all times so calm as at Puerto Cabello. This being the case, it is surprising that the Spaniards should in the first instance have made Burburata, which is three miles to the east, their chief port, it being in every respect inferior.

Night in the tropics, when once the sun has set, soon veils everything: so I had no time on arrival to do more than cast a hasty glance around. The brig anchored abreast of the fort, which is on the spit of land already mentioned, and we had only a hundred yards or so to pull to the shore. On landing, we walked about a quarter of a mile to the house of one of C.'s partners, where we were to pass the night. I had heard much of the unhealthiness of Puerto Cabello; but if I had not, I should have formed a bad opinion of the place from its lying so low, and being encircled with jungle, and still more from the peculiar smell which the night air brought to my nostrils from the swamps, and which made me shiver. I had smelt the same odour in what are called the barrier jungles in India, and in some parts of China, and I knew very well what it betokened—fever and cholera. I made up my mind at once as to what I should do. In the first place, I asked my host for mosquito curtains, which are a protection, though but a slight one, against malaria.

"Mosquito curtains!" said my friend, with an air of surprise; "there are no mosquitoes here."

"Well, of course you know best," I replied; "but, if there are none, what means that hum?"

"Oh," he answered, "there may be a few, just one or two, but we never use curtains. I advise you to adopt the plan of General A. You know, when Bolivar was in Guiana, he sent for General A., who was the only person who had curtains in camp, and said he must borrow them. The general brought them accordingly. The next morning Bolivar asked him how he had slept without his curtains. 'Excellency, I slept very well,' was the answer, 'for I always take with me a second pair;' at the same time producing an immense liquor-flask, quite empty, which he had drained as a substitute."

Not admiring this plan, I adopted another of my own, and as soon as I entered my bedroom, I closed all the doors and windows, and wrapped myself up tight in a blanket. As the temperature of the room was one hundred and ten degrees Fahrenheit, the effect resembled that of a Turkish bath, and I streamed with perspiration at every pore. Of course, while this lasted, there was no chance of fever, and I slept soundly till two A.M., when I struck a light and descried an immense spider just over my head, and a scorpion of a pale yellow colour ascending the wall near the door. After that pleasing discovery I thought it as well to keep my light burning until dawn.

My first visit in the morning was to the custom-house, which I found under the superintendence of the brother of the Secretary of State for Finance: a small taciturn man, who replied to all remarks that were not direct questions by a violent puff of his cigarette, and a very slight inclination of his head. The custom-house has but two stores, which will hold only one-sixth of the amount of goods that can be warehoused at La Guaira. The trade of Puerto Cabello is chiefly in exports, the imports being comparatively insignificant, while the reverse is the case at La Guaira. I was now able, with the help of daylight, to appreciate the excellence of the harbour, which is said to be the best in America. Not only is it landlocked in the way already described, and at the same time easy of access, but the water is so deep that ships can lie alongside the wharf and take in cargo direct from the shore. The custom-house, too, is conveniently situated, being but a few yards from the wharf, and the road to Valencia passes straight from it through the town into the country. It has been suggested that the pentagonal fort, on the spit of ground to the east of the harbour, should be pulled down, and the site turned into docks. Indeed, if a battery which has been constructed opposite what are called the reefs of Punta Brava, at the entrance of the harbour, were mounted with guns of the largest size, no other defence would be needed. The castle, or mirador, on the high rock to the south-east, would not be of much use against a foreign invasion, but it has ever proved a great

obstacle to troops advancing against Puerto Cabello from the interior; for, being compelled, in order to take it, to camp in the jungle, they have always suffered terribly from yellow fever, and in some cases have been quite destroyed by this fearful scourge. Some idea of its ravages may be formed from the fact that M. Julien, principal surgeon of Puerto Cabello, at the time of Humboldt's visit, told that traveller that in seven years he had had eight thousand cases of yellow fever in his hospital alone. Previous to that, things had been even worse, for in 1793, when Admiral Ariztizabel's fleet lay in the harbour, every third man died of the disease. Subsequently, during the War of Independence, an European regiment that was sent down to besiege the castle, died almost to a man, and more recently there have been instances of the entire crews of ships in the harbour perishing, so that the authorities have had to take charge of the deserted vessels. Some good has been done lately by cutting down the mangroves, which filled the port with decaying vegetation, but until the swampy jungle for miles round shall have been drained and cleared, pestilence will always hold its head-quarters at Puerto Cabello.

After walking round the wharves, and throwing various things into the sluggish waters, in the vain hope of getting a rise out of the monstrous ground-sharks that swarm at the bottom, I paid a visit to the largest private store in the town. It was about a hundred and fifty feet long, and contained all sorts of European imports, from calicoes to penknives and pale ale. But there was one article in immense quantities, which rather surprised me—Chinese crackers. "Good Heavens," I said, "what gluttons the children here must be of squibs; why, English boys are moderate in comparison!" "It is not the children," replied C., smiling, "that have such an appetite for fireworks, but the saints. All these crackers will be used up at the holy ceremonies during the fiestas of the next few months." Behind this building was a coffee store, in which heaps of the shining berry were being packed for exportation. The coffee is brought down from the interior on mules. Every mule carries two bags, containing each a quintal, or hundred-weight, worth, at the time of my visit, sixteen dollars. The native bags, of which I saw forty-two thousand lying in the store, are not stout enough for stowing aboard ship, and much time is lost in transferring the coffee from them into strong canvas bags. The coffee is judged of by the smell, and according to the evenness of size of the berries. I was told that the proprietor of this store, an Englishman, who had resided about twenty years at Puerto Cabello, was just going home with a fortune of seventy thousand pounds. From the store, I went to look at the aqueduct, which supplies the town with excellent water from the Rio Estéban, a distance of about three miles. It is a useful work, but there is nothing remarkable in its construction. The village of Estéban is a favourite resort of the Cabellians for pic-nics; for they are a pleasure-loving race, in spite of earthquakes, intense heat, and yellow fever.

STAPLEFORD GRANGE.

I HEARD the following narrative at a dinner-party in a country-house about five miles from the place where the events referred to occurred, and it was related to me by the chief actress in it—a pretty, lady-like girl of twenty, the daughter of the rector of the parish in which Stapleford Grange is situated. I had sprained my ankle in the morning, and instead of going in to dinner with the rest of the party, was made to lie on a sofa in the drawing-room; and it was after the ladies came in from the dining-room that pretty Cissy Miles, at her hostess's urgent request, related it to me. I give it, as nearly as I can remember, in her own words.

It was the Saturday afternoon before Christmas Day, nearly two years ago, when my six brothers, all younger than myself, and I were skating on our squire's fish-pond. We had been skating since dinner, and it was not till the wintry daylight was beginning to wane that the recollection rushed across me that I had entirely forgotten to do a commission my mother had given to me in the morning. This commission was to walk to the Grange, a big farm-house, and bespeak some geese for dinner on New Year's Day. My mother had said decidedly, "Those geese must be ordered to-day, Cissy," so I knew that I should have to go: although the Grange was a mile off, although it was very cold, and darkness was coming on, and although I was terribly afraid of a big black dog which was chained up just in front of the Grange back door.

"Who'll go with me to the Grange?" I called out quickly, as this remembrance occurred to me, sitting down and beginning to unstrap my skates. "I've forgotten all about the geese, and mamma said I was to order them to-day."

No one answered. The next day was Sunday, and it might thaw before Monday. Every boy, big or little, seemed laudably desirous of making the most of present opportunities.

"I daren't go by myself," I called out in a pathetic tone; "it would be quite dark before I got home again."

"Tell the truth, Cis," called out Charlie, a quick, good-natured boy of fifteen, "and say you're afraid of Jip. Never mind, I'll come with you, if you must go." And he joined me on the bank, and proceeded to take off his skates.

"What'll you bet, Jim," he called out, during this operation, "that we ain't at home by a quarter to five? It's exactly four now."

"A bob," was the answer, as Jim whirled by.

"Done; and remember you dub up. Now, Cis, come along, and I can tell you you'll have to run."

Thanks to all my brothers, I was a pretty

good runner, and we sped across the squire's fields, and through the narrow lane towards the Grange, as fast as possible. When we got to the last field, which joined the farm-yard, we slackened pace a little, and when we got into the big court-yard itself, we were walking almost slowly.

"How dreadfully lonely it looks, Charlie," I said, almost with a shiver at the desolate aspect of the place, which had been a grand gentleman's house forty years ago, but had been suffered to fall almost into ruins. "I am glad I'm not Mrs. Johnson, particularly as she has no children, nor anybody to keep her company when Mr. Johnson is away."

"Well, don't you stop and prose to her for ever such a time, Cis, do you hear?" returned Charlie, good humouredly. "I want that bob of Jim's, and we've only five-and-twenty minutes to do the jaw, and get home in."

"All right," I said, and we went up to the back door.

I must try and describe a little of the geography of the Grange now.

The court-yard was a big square place, much bigger than farm-yards usually are, and it must have been an imposing entrance in the old gone by days. There were two entrances to it, the one we had come in by, leading to our village, the other exactly opposite on the other side of the court-yard, leading over a quarter of mile of fields into the road to our market town of D. To the left hand of the court-yard was a long straight line of what had once been stables, but were now farm-buildings; and to the right, the north side—a long straight line also—of the house itself.

The front door, which was exactly in the middle of the straight line, and which was flanked on either side by several windows, was now never opened; but the back door, which was the entry to a little bit of building standing back from the line of house, and which looked almost as if it had been stuck on to the big square mansion as an after-thought, was on this Saturday afternoon standing a little ajar.

Jip did not greet us with his usual noisy welcome, and there was no sound of any sort about the place except the gabbling of some turkeys in the rear of the farm-buildings. I don't know that I felt any particular fear, but as we followed the path under the shadow of the old elm-trees to the half open door, a sort of oppressed feeling came over me, induced, I suppose, by the utter silence of the place, and I felt almost as if Jip's bark would have been a welcome sound. We went up and knocked at the door, and when I turned round, I observed that Jip's kennel, which stood exactly opposite, in a line with the front of the house, was empty.

"Where can Jip be?" I said; "I thought they never let him loose;" and I walked forward a few steps, and became aware that the dog's chain and collar were lying beside the kennel. I stood for a moment or two wondering, whilst Charlie, getting impatient at Mrs. Johnson's non-appearance, knocked again at the door. Suddenly, some marks on the flagged pathway in front of the kennel arrested my attention, and upon stooping down to look more closely, I saw that they were—drops and smears of blood.

I raised myself in sudden terror, and called Charlie, and when he came to my side and examined the pathway, we found that there was a bloody trail up to the door.

"What can it be, Charlie?" I said, in a whisper.

"I don't know," Charlie returned, thoughtfully; "poor Jip come to grief, perhaps. It's odd Mrs. Johnson doesn't come; I think I'll go on a voyage of discovery; stay here till I come back;" and he pushed the door further open.

"No, let me go too," I said, hastily, half frightened. I am a coward at the sight of blood.

"Well! don't make a row then;" and we entered the little passage together.

On the left hand was the kitchen door, which was shut, and I observed that Charlie hesitated for a moment before he put out his hand to open it. Only for a moment though; then he unlatched the door, and the bright farm kitchen was before us.

There was a big blazing fire in the grate, which showed that on the table the tea-things were set for tea; the kettle was hissing away merrily, and some tea-cakes stood to keep warm on a low stand before the fire. Everything looked snug and cozy. Evidently Mrs. Johnson had prepared everything ready for tea when the farmer should return from D. market; and was now gone up-stairs to "clean" herself.

I had time to make all these observations over Charlie's shoulder, before he gave a sudden start, and strode with a low exclamation to a bundle of clothes which lay at the further and darker side of the kitchen, on the smooth stone floor. A bundle of clothes it looked like, with Jip lying asleep beside it in a very strange attitude.

I shall never forget the horror of the next moment. Huddled up, evidently in the attitude in which she had fallen, lay Mrs. Johnson, with a gaping wound across her throat, from which the blood was still trickling, and Jip, with a large pool of blood near his head, lay dead beside her.

I stood for a moment, too, paralysed with horror—such intense, thrilling horror, that only any one who has experienced such a feeling can understand it—and then, with a low scream, I sank on the floor, and put up my hand to try and hide the horrible sight.

"Hush!" whispered Charlie, sternly, taking hold of my hands, and forcibly dragging me on to my feet again; "you mustn't make a sound. Whoever has done this can't be far off; you must run home, Cissy, as hard as ever you can. Come!"

He dragged me to the door, and then I turned sick all over, and tumbled down again. I felt as if I *could* not stir another step.

"It's no use, Charlie, I can't stir," I said. "Leave me and go without me."

"Nonsense! Try again."

I tried again, but it was no use; my legs positively would not move, and precious time was being wasted.

"You fool!" Charlie said, bitterly and passionately. How was a boy of fifteen to understand

a woman's weakness? "Then I must leave you. It's Johnson's money they no doubt want. They wouldn't murder if they could help it, and Johnson will be back directly."

"Yes, yes. Go," I said, understanding that he wanted to fetch help before the farmer came. "I will hide somewhere."

"In the kennel there," he said, looking round quickly; "and don't stir."

He pushed me into poor murdered Jip's kennel, and then he disappeared, and I was left alone in the gathering darkness with those two prostrate forms on the kitchen floor as my company, and perhaps the murderers close at hand.

I combated the faint feeling which Charlie could not understand by pinching my arms and sticking pins into them, and after a little judicious torture of this sort, the sick feeling went off, and I could think again. "I will take off my boots," I thought, after a moment. "They make such a noise, and I may have to move," for already a glimmering plan had rushed across my brain of how I might warn Johnson. So I rose a little from my crouching position, unlaced them, and slipped them off. I had barely done this, when I heard the sound of voices, and the sick trembling feeling came on so strongly, that the pin torture had to be again applied. In another minute three men came out of the back door, and I could distinctly hear every word of their conversation.

"He's late, I think," said one. "If he doesn't come soon, we must go; that girl 'll be home soon. I heard the old woman tell her not to stop."

"What's it signify?" said another. "We can soon stop her mouth."

"It isn't worth so much blood, Dick," said the third. "We've only got fifty pound by this, and the farmer 'll not have more."

"He ought to be coming by now," said the first, anxiously, coming a step or two nearer the kennel. "Hallo! What's that?"

The tone made me turn sick again. Had Charlie found help already? No. The three men were standing close to the kennel, and during the moment's silence that followed the man's exclamation, I remembered that I had dropped my muff. I tried to stop the hard quick thumping of my heart, which I felt certain they must hear, and then, as if fascinated, I raised my head from my knees—for till that moment I had been crouching at the furthest end of the kennel—and saw a hairy fierce-looking face glaring in at the entrance of my hiding-place. I tried hard not to scream, and I succeeded; but in another moment I should have fainted if the face had not been taken away. To my utter amazement, as the face disappeared, its owner said:

"I thought some one might be hiding. That's a lady's trumpery. What can it mean?"

Evidently I had not been seen, thanks to my dark dress and the gathering twilight. I breathed freely now; unless something very unforeseen occurred, I was safe.

"Some one has been, and has dropped it," a voice said quickly. "That's all on account of your cursed foolery, Dick," it went on angrily. "Why couldn't you stop at the door, as I told you?"

"Well, let's do something now," the third said, anxiously, "or we shall be having some one here."

The three men then went back into the house again, and I could hear them speaking in low tones; presently the voices grew louder, and they were evidently quarrelling. In another minute they came out again, and from what I could hear, they began to search in the farm-buildings and outhouses for the owner of the muff.

"There's no one here," at last one called out. "They must have gone away again. Go to the gate, Bill, and see if anybody is coming that way."

After a moment, Bill returned to the other two, who were now standing talking in low whispers at the back of the kennel, and said:

"No, there's no one coming." And my heart sank as I thought how long it would be before succour could arrive.

"The fellow's late," one of the others said, after a minute or two; "but we had better be on the watch now. Mind, both of you, that he's down from his gig before he sees us."

They walked away along the line of house towards the other entrance by which Mr. Johnson would come; and I, thinking they had gone to take up their hiding-places, put my head cautiously out of the mouth of the kennel, and looked round.

Surely I could reach the house without being seen, I thought, and if I could but reach the big ruinous drawing-room, which commanded a view of the fields, the farmer would cross, I might be able to warn him back from the fate which awaited him. I *must* warn him if I could; it was too horrible that another murder should be done.

I was out of the kennel and in the kitchen before I recollected that I should have to pass close to the murdered woman before I could gain the door leading into the hall, which I must cross to gain the drawing-room. I shuddered as I passed the table and drew near to the horrible scene; but, to my utter surprise and no little terror, Mrs. Johnson had vanished! the dark gleaming pool of blood and the dead dog were still there, but the huddled up bundle of clothes was gone.

What had they done with it? In spite of the urgent necessity there was for immediate action, I stood motionless for a minute, hesitating to cross the dimly-lighted hall. Suppose it should be there. I had never seen death before, and the thought of again seeing the dead woman looking so ghastly and horrible with that great gaping wound across her throat, was at that moment more terrible to me than the thought of her murderers' return.

Whilst I stood hesitating, a shadow passed across the first window, and, looking up quickly, to my horror I saw the three men in another moment pass the second window.

I had no time for thought. In another minute they would be in the kitchen. I turned and fled down the passage and across the hall, rushing into the first open door, which happened to

be the drawing-room door, and instinctively half closed it behind me as I had found it. Then I glanced wildly round the bare empty room in search of shelter.

There was not a particle of furniture in the room, and it was quite empty except for some apples on the floor, and a few empty hampers and sacks at the further end. How could I hide?

I heard the footsteps crossing the hall, and then, as they came nearer, with the feeling of desperation I sped noiselessly across the room, laid down flat behind the hampers, and, as the door opened, threw an empty sack over me. I felt I *must* be discovered, for my head was totally uncovered; and I watched them fascinated, breathless from intense terror. They walked to the window, saying, "We shall see better here," and looked out, presently all exclaiming together, "He's coming now; that black spot over there;" and, without glancing in my direction, they left the room again. I was safe, but what *could* I do to save the farmer? Surely Charlie must be coming with help now, but would he be in time? *I* must try and save him, was the conviction that impressed itself upon me in a lightning thought, and as it crossed my brain I sprang to the window. All thought of self vanished then with the urgency of what I had to do. I was only eager—nervously, frantically eager—to save the farmer's life.

They say that mad people can do things which seem impossible to sane ones, and I must have been quite mad with terror and fright for the next few minutes.

Seven feet below me, stretching down the slope of the hill, was the garden, now lying in long ploughed ridges, with the frozen snow on the top of each of them, and at the bottom of the garden was a stone wall four feet high. Beyond this, as far as the eye could reach, extended the snow-covered fields, and coming along the cart road to the left was Mr. Johnson in his gig.

I threw open the window, making noise enough to alarm the men if they heard it, and sprang on to the window-ledge, and then, tearing off my jacket, threw it on the ground, and, shutting my eyes, jumped down. The high jump hurt my wrists and uncovered feet dreadfully, but I dare not stop a moment. I rushed down the garden, tumbling two or three times in my progress, and, when I came to the wall, scrambled over it head-foremost. The farmer was just opening the gate of the field I was in, and I made straight towards him, trying to call out. But I could not utter a word; so I flew across the snow, dashed through the brook, careless that the bridge was a few feet further down, and when I rushed up to Mr. Johnson's side, I could only throw up my arms and shriek out "Murder!" just as a loud report rang out through the frosty air, and I fell forward on my face.

"And were you hurt?" I asked, as she paused.

"Yes, a little. Look, here is the scar;" and she raised the flowing fold of tarletane from her soft white arm, and pointed to a white oval-shaped scar. "I was ill for several weeks afterwards, but Dr. B. said it was from fright, not from the shot. They told me subsequently, that just as I must have reached the farmer, the men Charlie had fetched entered the farm-yard at the other side, and took the murderers unawares; but one of them, who was behind a tree near the other gate, had just caught sight of me, and had fired in revenge, and they said that if I had not thrown my arms forward, I should perhaps have been killed."

"And Mrs. Johnson?" I asked.

The girl's face became very grave.

"She was quite dead. The men had put her under the dresser, which explains why I did not see her as I passed through the kitchen, and the poor husband went away directly afterwards. The whole house is uninhabited now. Nobody will live there, and of course it is said to be haunted. I have never been there since that day, and I think I shall never dare to go there again."

The girl stopped, for the gentlemen had just come in from the dining-room, and one, tall and black bearded, who had been pointed out to me by my hostess as the Squire of Stapleford, and Cicely Miles's betrothed, now came up to her, and laying his hand on her white shoulder with an air of possession, said tenderly,

"What makes you look so flushed, Cissy? Have you been transgressing again?"

"Yes, Robert. Mrs. Saunders asked me to tell Mr. Dacre," she answered.

"And you will be ill for a week in consequence. I shall ask Mr. Dacre to write the story, to save another repetition of it. You know we wish you to forget all about it, dearest."

"It was too horrible for that," she said, simply. And then the squire turned to me and made the request, of which this tale is the fulfilment.

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AT THE BAR.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "A CRUISE UPON WHEELS," &C. &C.

CHAPTER XXXVI. THE MISTS BEGIN TO CLEAR AWAY.

WE have got to the last stage of all, and the end draws very near.

In the last chapter we left all that great concourse of persons who were assembled in the court-house of the Old Bailey to witness the trial of Gabrielle Penmore, waiting anxiously till they should hear what was about to be said by him on whom the duty devolved of balancing one against the other those two theories which had been laid before the court, one of which assumed the guilt and the other the innocence of the Prisoner at the Bar. The relative worth of these, the degree of credit of which each was worthy, and by which of the two arguments the jury were to be influenced in coming to their final decision, it was now the judge's work to decide.

"In the course of all the long years during which I have exercised the office of judge," the old man said, "no case has ever come before me similar to this in strength of evidence on both sides, or in which each has seemed to preponderate in its turn with such an overwhelming force. That for the prosecution, as it was developed before us, step by step, and point by point, seemed gradually to shut up, one by one, each avenue of escape by which the accused might have hoped to pass, until at last there came to be amassed against her such an accumulated load of testimony as made it appear an impossible thing that she should ever emerge from under so overwhelming a structure. Such was the effect of the evidence which was brought forward to support the prosecution. It was almost conclusive, as convincing probably as circumstantial evidence ever can be. And yet no sooner had the counsel for the defence put forward his view of the case, than it became evident that there was still one loophole left by which escape was yet attainable for the accused, one avenue by which it was possible for her to pass forth into the light unhindered and unhurt—if only it could be shown that the way along that avenue was clear and unencumbered."

And with that the old judge proceeded to pass in review all the evidence which had been taken in court during these two days. He went through it all with the utmost care and completeness, commenting on the testimony of each witness in its turn with infinite clearness and perspicuity. Those few words which he had spoken, to begin with, formed, so to speak, the text which he now went on to illustrate more fully. The reader will conceive with what attention he was listened to, as he thus examined all that had been put forward by the different witnesses. To two persons in that court each word that fell from the old man's lips was indeed of awful import. Throughout this trial there had been something of comfort to Gabrielle in the thought that her cause was in such hands as those of the old judge, and that her life was in his keeping. She had felt throughout a sort of trust in him, together with something of reverence, which had even made her try to stand when first he began to speak; an attempt which had soon, however, been abandoned, as her forces had quickly given away.

At first, and as the evidence for the prosecution was passing under the judge's consideration, it seemed to Gabrielle that this one in whom she had trusted had turned against her, so completely did he do justice to the evidence, showing how strong it was, how full, how convincing. It made her tremble to hear him admit this: it had never appeared to her before how powerful, how almost impregnable, the case was against her; what a mass of damning proof the accusers were possessed of. What was this righteous judge doing? He seemed to be accumulating evidence against her. Did he think her guilty in his heart? Did his sense of justice compel him to condemn her?

It was indeed a terrible moment. More than half a century of law-study had taught this gentleman to know what evidence was, to understand it fully, and estimate it truly, whether in its strength or in its weakness, and therefore it was that he was able to appreciate the full force of this evidence against Gabrielle Penmore — which, indeed, the reader will admit, was most strong — and to put it before those who listened to him with an extraordinary force and clearness. So much for the prosecution. But when at last the time came for considering what might be said on the other side, and the evidence for the defence came to be reviewed in its turn, then men saw that all that proof which

had seemed so complete and so conclusive as it was spread forth before them must give place to proofs yet more complete and more conclusive, and that it was only to show how irresistible were these last that this wise gentleman had dwelt so long on the strength of those which they were to supersede. If the first arguments were strong, what must be the strength of those which could overpower them?

For, in his judgment, he said, this evidence for the defence was evidence against which no opposition could stand. It was a strange case. The facts which had been proved in support of the defence in no way disproved those which were put forward by the prosecution. Both these sets of facts *were* facts. Those which were stated in the first instance as proving the guilt of the accused might legitimately cause suspicion to attach to her in an extraordinary degree. It was not wonderful that suspicion should have attached to her while only those facts were known. There was, however, this difference between the evidence for the prosecution and the evidence for the defence. The evidence for the prosecution would lead the jury to *suspect* how the deceased lady had died—but the evidence for the defence had done more, it had brought them to *know* how she died. That was the difference, and it was a great one.

From that moment—from the moment when these meaning words were spoken—a change seemed to come over the proceedings in court. All seemed to wear a different aspect. It is hardly too much to say that at that moment a tide turned in the affairs of Gilbert and Gabrielle Penmore. Those who were well versed in what takes place in law courts, and who knew, by long experience, much about judges and juries, whispered each other that the summing-up was all in favour of the accused, and that the trial was virtually over. And so indeed it was. From point to point the judge went on examining the evidence, showing how clear it was in all things; how evident that the deceased lady had for some time been in the habit of swallowing certain quantities of opium; how, having commenced the practice under the desire to alleviate pain, and continued it, as many had done before her, because of the pleasurable sensations which the use of the drug imparted, she had probably taken at last a larger dose than usual, and this, acting on a constitution especially liable to the evil influence of opium, had killed her. This was what the counsel for the defence had already told them, and in doing so had only acted as the evidence which he had laid before them had justified him in doing.

Yes, the initiated ones were right; the trial was virtually over. As the judge went on, he seemed to carry the mass of his listeners with him. A great measure of excitement was astir in the place, though it could not be said in what way it was shown. Outward decency was maintained by all; but it may have been that all drew their breath harder than was their use, that heads were pressed more eagerly forward, and that there was some swaying and movement from side to side of this great crowd of sympathising human beings. Then there would be a sort of rustling and stir among them, which would express much, and now and again one of the multitude would whisper a hurried word into a neighbour's ear.

"Virtually over," "Summing up all favourable." There could be no doubt of it. The judge paused, it is true, to censure the ease and readiness with which Cornelius Vampi had allowed himself to be persuaded into selling laudanum to the deceased; he did not shrink either from expressing his regret at finding that follies, so long ago exploded as a belief in magic and the influences of the stars, should still have attractions for sane and even educated men; but he in no respect considered that such perversion of judgment rendered those in whom it existed unfit to give evidence as to facts with which they had been mixed up. The evidence given, the testimony borne by Cornelius Vampi, and by the gentleman who seemed to be his disciple, was clear and consistent throughout. It was in no respect shaken by the severe and searching cross-examination which each of those witnesses had had to sustain, and it was as worthy of belief, and as convincing in all respects, as any that he, the judge, had ever heard in a court of justice.

"Virtually over." From the moment when the old judge had passed from the consideration of the evidence for the prosecution to a review of that offered for the defence, from the moment when he had stated openly that the testimony brought forward to support the prosecution, taught men to SUSPECT how Diana Carrington had died, but that the evidence for the defence taught them to KNOW how she had died, from that moment the trial was, to all intents and purposes, over; and with every additional word of that long summing-up, the nature of the verdict which must follow it became only more and more certain, till at last the very barriers and restraints that held Gabrielle Penmore prisoner seemed actually to drop away from her as the old man spoke, and leave her free and unshackled.

The faces of men and women in the court wore an altered expression now; their attitude, so to speak, was more easy, their breath came more freely, as if the verdict were already given. Nay, the report that all was going well got beyond the limits of the court, and was carried to the very people in the street outside; and when at last the accents of the judge, which had latterly sunk very low, ceased altogether, when the jury, hardly waiting to be questioned, without retiring, almost without a word of consultation together, returned their verdict of "Not guilty," no one in court but felt that the words were a mere form, necessary indeed to be uttered, yet only dealing with a happy but foregone conclusion.

The tumult which followed this announcement that the troubles of Gabrielle were at an end, and that the cloud which had hung over her was in a moment dispelled, was not to be repressed. Even in the awful precincts of a court of justice it was impossible, for the moment, to restrain

the long pent-up emotion which now demanded to have its way. From mouth to mouth the good news passed, and the words of the verdict echoed through the hall so quickly that there was hardly any appreciable lapse of time before the cheers of the people without the court proclaimed to those within that the happy tidings had reached them also.

That day on which the trial of Gabrielle Penmore came to an end had been one of those which, beginning in great splendour, had become clouded over to some extent as the afternoon advanced. But now, when the short daylight was near its end, there was another change; the sun broke out once more before setting, and all things within its reach were in a moment turned to gold. It is not easy for the sunlight to find its way into that grim court-house in the Old Bailey, but there were crevices even here through which certain of these golden rays managed to penetrate; and still more, there was a sudden increase of the volume of light which filled the building, and a change in the colour of that light, which conveyed to the senses of all who were there assembled the knowledge that the mist-clouds had cleared away, and that once again the sun was shining down upon the world. There was no one present in the place at that time who failed to notice the change, and few who did not receive from it a distinct gratification. Those earth-born vapours which had been spread between mankind and that which typifies to us the very glory of God had passed away, and once again there was nothing but the blessed air of heaven between the World and the Sun which shone upon it.

Say what we may, we are all affected by such a change as this. Reason about it as you will, there is a special happiness which the sunshine brings with it wherever it appears. The sun shines, it is true, on the wicked as well as on the good. Vice, and crime, and pain, and sorrow, cease not from off the world when the sun's rays are on it. There are felons working out their life-long sentences, there are criminals plotting fresh deeds of infamy, and there are sick people writhing on their beds in agony when the sun shines, just as there are when it is hidden from view. All this we know with that cold knowledge which is of the intellect alone. The heart will have nothing to say to those highly reasonable convictions, but cleaves, in spite of them, to a creed of its own—a creed in which there are more articles than we are most of us aware of, and one of the most prominent of which is this—that sunshine and happiness are closely allied, and that the clouds which darken the earth have some unexplained connexion with the sorrows to which man is born.

At all events, there were not wanting those who, on this particular day of which we are speaking, felt that it was a good thing that the sun should have come out just at the moment when Gabrielle's innocence was proclaimed aloud.

Just as the trial which has occupied so many pages of this narrative was virtually over, before those last words which brought it formally to an end were uttered, so now this story may be fairly stated to have reached its termination, although some few last words remain yet to be spoken before Reader and Author part company.

That verdict which, once pronounced, made Gabrielle a free woman, which threw open her prison doors and left her at liberty once more, was hardly heard or understood by her whom it chiefly affected. As she stood to receive it, all things swam before her eyes, and the tumult in the court was to her a dim unreal thing which she could not understand. She knew that all was well, but it was a joy that frightened her in its excess. The extremes had met, and she felt some such sickness coming over her as might have attended a different verdict. She could only look across to where she knew her husband was, with a strange half smile, and she knew that he too was looking at her, and signing to her how happy they were. She knew, too, that all eyes were fixed upon her, and that there were even some of those quite near her who made as if they would have taken her by the hand. By-and-by she came also to know that there was a sudden silence in the place, and that the old judge was speaking again.

She heard faintly, incompletely, as she saw. But still she knew that what the judge was saying was mingled with some distant sound of many voices cheering in the street without. Those about her told her that his lordship was addressing her herself, and she tried hard to listen, but could only do so very imperfectly. There were ladies crying as the judge spoke, and some, as Gabrielle thought, were even carried out of court.

She listened, she strained her worn-out attention, and wondered within herself that she heard so little, or understood so ill. She did, however, understand something of what was said. She knew that the old man addressed her in words full of sympathy and respect. He told her that the verdict which had just been given, and in which he entirely concurred, not only set her free and exonerated her from the charge which had been brought against her, but that it reinstated her character, which had been so unhappily and unjustly assailed, leaving her without stain and without reproach. She had passed through a martyrdom, he could call it nothing else, and come out of the ordeal victorious. He said something, too, about not wishing to detain her longer from the rest of which she must stand in such earnest need, and then—then—he ceased to speak, or she to hear, which was it?

They bore her away, for she had fainted, to a room where there was fresher air, and where it was very quiet. Gilbert was there, too, and was bending over her when she came to herself. "Am I to go home?" she asked. For she was still hardly herself, and could not yet believe that she was free. That strange horrible nightmare which had lasted so long, was it possible that she had really awakened from it?

And now there came a messenger in search of Gilbert. The old judge had sent for him. If he could spare a few moments, the justice would

be glad to see him in his own private room. Here the old man addressed the young one in terms of the warmest congratulation and sympathy. He spoke highly of the manner in which the defence had been conducted, and of Penmore's courage in undertaking it. He even predicted great things for the young barrister's future, promising that he would most certainly keep his eye upon him, and making Gilbert promise in turn that if any occasion should ever offer in which he—the justice—could help him, he would always remember that he had a friend at hand who would only be too glad to serve him. The justice would not keep him now, as there were sacred claims upon every moment of his time, but begged that he might see him again very shortly.

As Penmore came out of the justice's room, he fell at once into the hands of a group of attorneys who were waiting to catch him. These gentlemen—and Mr. Craft was among the foremost of them—were eager to congratulate him, and plied him with offers of employment whenever he should be ready to take it. Nay, one of them did actually, then and there, thrust a brief into his hand, retaining him upon the spot, and Gilbert found it in his pocket hours afterwards where he had thrust it away, not knowing very well what he was doing.

"I'll tell you what, Mr. Penmore," quoth Craft, as they were about to part company, "you was right about it, sir, and I was wrong. You've got the head of a lawyer, and, what I didn't think, the tongue of a lawyer too. And as to your foreign accent, it don't stand in your way a bit, and after the first few sentences, and when you begin to warm to your work, hang me if one thinks of it at all."

Gilbert broke away from this worthy gentleman and his colleagues as quickly as he could. His heart was literally charged with pent-up feeling, and he could not speak. One thing, and one thing only, he could think of; it was his longing to be alone—alone with Gabrielle. Nothing but that could be thought of now. Nothing else was tolerable.

It came at last—the time when they could be alone. For a while it was thought better that they should remain within the precincts of the court, the crowd being so great outside, and likely to recognise them. And it was not till it had got to be quite dark that at last they were got out at a side-door and smuggled away in a cab. Ah, those cabs! always ready. Their aid is called in, in all sorts of emergencies, of joy and sorrow. The man who is summoned to a death-bed far away dashes off to the railway station in a cab, and he who, after long years of absence, returns home to loving friends, hurries away from the terminus, as the other hurried *to* it—still in a cab. It was in a cab that Gabrielle was taken from her home to a prison, and it is in a cab that she travels now from the prison to her home.

They are together and alone at last, and so we will for the time leave them. The heaviness, endured for the night, is past, and the morning joy has come. On such joy we have no right to intrude. What pen could deal with it, even were it right to attempt to do so? We can fancy their speechless happiness, but we will not speak of it. These two wished to be alone with their enormous joy, and surely they shall have their wish.

CHAPTER XXXVII. THE SUN COMES OUT.

THERE was one person, and one person only, to whom the issue of that trial with which we have so long been occupied, not only failed to bring any satisfaction, but caused, on the contrary, an acute and sudden anguish, such as might move our pity if it did not excite rather our feelings of aversion and horror. Jane Cantanker remained still about the court after her evidence had been given, eagerly listening to, and closely watching, all that was said and done. She was there when Gilbert commenced his speech for the defence, and she smiled with contempt as she listened to its confident tone. She was there when Vampi gave his evidence, and as he spoke, and as the other witnesses for the defence told, each one, his tale, there crept in upon her heart a sort of doubt—arising there for the first time—about the issue of the trial. She would not entertain that doubt, however. She put it away from her by main force. Had it not been evident all along how the thing was to end. It was hardly to be a trial at all. A conviction and a sentence; all things pointing one way from the beginning. The reply of the prosecution gave her a sort of horrible comfort again. Yes, yes, it was as she had thought. That momentary doubt of hers had been an impertinence. How was it she had ever listened to it? The prosecutor knew better, of course, and how finely he was demolishing that trumpery attempt at a defence.

But when the end drew near, and it began to be evident which way the verdict would go, when this merciless woman saw that the event was likely to turn out so differently from what she had anticipated, then, indeed, such rage and disappointment took possession of her as a tigress might feel in seeing the hunter who had destroyed her cubs escape out of her reach. She listened with a sort of incredulous eagerness. She questioned those about her, as if doubting the evidence of her own senses. She asked if it was possible that there was any chance for the prisoner, if it could be that they were going to suffer that murderess to escape? The people whom she thus addressed stared at her in astonishment. They could not understand her. "I wish," said one man to whom she had spoken in such language, "I wish I had a thousand pounds depending on her getting off. And as to 'murderess,' she's no more a murderess than you are yourself, and perhaps not so much," he added, in a lower key, for the edification of a friend.

Jane Cantanker did not heed his words. She became more and more excited, and when at last the verdict was given, and she knew that her enemy was free, she lost all self-control, and screamed aloud that her mistress had been murdered, and that her death should be avenged,

though it should be by her hands who spoke the words. In the tumult that, as we have seen, followed the giving of the verdict, her wild outcry was not heard. She fought and tore her way among the crowd to get out of the court, and those who came in her path fell on one side to let her pass, believing, as Cornelius Vampi had done before, that this terrible woman was mad.

Her violence, her menaces, her fury, continued when she got outside. She howled forth the story of her mistress's wrongs in unintelligible words. She called on the bystanders to revolt against such gross and monstrous injustice, and to help her to take vengeance upon this woman who was escaping before their very eyes—in a word, her demeanour was so wild, and her threats and denunciations were so alarming, that it became necessary at last for the police who were about the neighbourhood of the court to interfere.

The efforts of these to keep her quiet were in no degree successful. Indeed, she seemed now to be more violent than ever. She accused the police of a neglect of duty. They, like the rest, were playing her false. If they suffered that woman to go free, they would be letting loose a murderess on the world.

While she was thus raving, it chanced that the same constable came up who had encountered her before, outside the walls of Newgate. "You told me you would keep her safe," she cried, at sight of the man, recognising him instantly. "You promised me that she should not escape, and now you are going to let her slip through your fingers. Good ones, you are, to look after the public safety."

The constable who had seen her before, talked aside with his colleagues.

"She's a poor mad creetur," he said, keeping his eye upon her. "I've seen her before; she's been on the lurk about here for some time past."

The men talked about it awhile longer, till a sergeant of police coming up, and hearing what they had to say, decided that it would be the wisest course to have her removed at once to some place of security.

"She'll be doing a mischief otherwise to somebody or other," he said, "or maybe to herself."

It seemed so likely, that no time was lost in carrying out the officer's suggestion, and the wretched woman was removed, struggling and appealing to the crowd for succour to the last. No one interfered, however, for the report had got about that she was only a poor crazy woman; and indeed the people assembled in the Old Bailey considered that there was sufficient proof of that fact in what their own eyes and ears told them. Mad, evidently mad.

Alas, and were they right? Was this conclusion, arrived at by so many, a just one after all? Had these recent events turned her brain? The dwelling, as she had lately done, upon one fixed idea night and day incessantly, had that been too much for her? Her love for her mistress, her grief at the loss she had sustained, her wild increasing thirst for vengeance, had these conflicting passions, seething and working without intermission in her head, destroyed the balance of her mind, and upset at last her reason?

Such was the opinion of many persons well qualified to judge in such matters. It was the opinion of the magistrate before whom she was taken. It was the opinion of the medical officer who examined her, and it was the opinion of the authorities at the county lunatic asylum, to which she was at length consigned.

Poor unhappy creature. It was too true. The force of these terrible emotions indulged in to an excess, and to the exclusion of all other thoughts, the want of rest, the neglect of all things that mind and body need to keep them in health, had done their dreadful work, and this uneducated intellect had at length altogether given way. For some time Jane Cantanker remained a dangerous maniac, her case one of the worst in the asylum. The deranged mind retained, unhappily, that one fixed idea which lay at the root of its distortion—the desire for vengeance. This varied not. Be the inconsistencies and follies which succeeded one another in the wretched woman's mind as various and incongruous as they might, there was always at least consistency, nay, something of coherency, in this. Her story never varied. Her mistress whom she had loved was dead, had been murdered by one Gabrielle Penmore, and must be speedily and completely avenged. She would repeat this story over to herself or to others a hundred times a day, and would concoct as many schemes for carrying her vengeance out, brooding over them by herself, or consulting others as to their feasibility, whenever she could get a listener.

Among those who visited this asylum from time to time, seeking for tidings of its unhappy inmates, there was one lady who came only to inquire for this particular patient, Jane Cantanker, and who showed a marked anxiety to hear of her condition. She would ask eagerly at such times if there were any change in the state of the patient, if there was any prospect of amelioration, and begged that if there was anything she could do that might make the patient's life less terrible, they would tell her, that she might do it. She even threw out some hints about her wish to see this woman, if it might be possible. But the authorities, when they heard of this—and the doctor, who knew the patient more than all—were peremptory in their refusal. For the lady who made this request was that same Gabrielle Penmore whom this dangerous lunatic was for ever denouncing in her ravings.

At last it seemed as if the excessive violence of this woman's frenzy was beginning to wear itself out—to wear itself out along with the body of the poor creature whom it had possessed, so that she got to be quieter altogether, and her violent fits got to be fewer and further between. Gabrielle had one day taken that photograph of the late Miss Carrington, which has already done service in the course of this narrative, to

the asylum, and had left it there to be shown or not to the patient as the proper authorities might think best. It was decided at last to give it to her, and strangely enough, the possession of this portrait appeared to calm, rather than excite her. She would sit gazing upon it as a devotee might regard the image of some favourite saint, and would thrust it away into some place of security if any one approached her, as though she feared that it might be taken from her.

But just in proportion as the mental condition of Jane Cantanker showed some signs of improvement, so did her bodily health give way and fail. The body's strength declined day by day, almost hour by hour, and those who knew well the phenomena of such cases, foretold confidently that it would not be long before this woman died; but predicted also that, as the end drew near, the mind, whose faculties had been so terribly distorted, would surely be restored to reason.

And so indeed it proved. Imperfectly at first —just as in the sacred narrative the blind man recovering his sight, "saw men as trees walking"—so imperfectly her slowly recovering reason received the true images of the events which had passed, but received them more completely, and saw them with less distortion, as continually the mind of the poor woman grew clearer, and gained with each succeeding day increase of strength, till at the last it came about that she understood all, and knew all, as the reader understands and knows, and praying that if it were possible she might see Gabrielle before she died, was ministered to at the end of her days by the woman whom she had hated and persecuted, and yielded up the ghost, with a face bending over her which might have been the face of an angel.

She died with that portrait of the mistress whom she had loved clasped firmly in her hand, and it was Gabrielle still, who, when all was over, begged earnestly that it might not be taken away from her.

What remains to be told?

Not much now. If the reader imagines that any of those remarks of a disparaging sort which were called forth in the course of the trial just reported, and which bore reference to the favourite pursuits of our friend Cornelius Vampi, served, in any degree, to lower the art mystic in the esteem of that illustrious man, I can only say that the reader is mistaken most grievously. True to his principles as of old, that small observatory of his, which to some might seem a poor common-place garret, is still to him an enchanted chamber, while that window from which he looks out upon the stars, is still for him a door of communication through which the messages reach him from the unseen world. For him, the moon is a great deal more than a world of desolate mountains and barren valleys —a chaos of extinct volcanoes. For him, the planets are something other than mighty spheres hanging in the void, sustained by forces whose nature men can guess at, obedient in their movements to ascertained laws. For him, there are still good influences, and evil, in the heavenly bodies, which act upon the destinies of the sons of men.

Ah, let him be. There are plenty of us wise ones who are altogether above these small childishnesses, or who indulge them in other, and perhaps less harmless forms. There are plenty of us to represent the matter-of-fact interest. Plenty given up to the accumulation of wealth, and other sensible practical pursuits. If we hold the art mystic but in light esteem, if we believe not in our friend's astrological pretensions, after all we need not go to him; yet let us bear him no grudge nevertheless. For the benefit of those who are differently constituted, and who, like Mr. Lethwaite, take a certain interest in matters supernatural, it is only right that I should mention that our sage may still be consulted even in these enlightened days, and will construct a horoscope for the reader to-morrow, on the most approved principles, if the reader can only find him out.

Vampi is still the oracle of the poor in his neighbourhood, and is still able to do a vast deal of good among them. He is still gloriously happy, so much so that he is obliged at times to have recourse, as of old, to the scrubbing-brush next his skin, to act as a kind of ballast. He is still fat, and florid, and healthy, with a countenance that it does you good to look on. There is but one thing changed about him, and that, after all, is connected entirely with his business arrangements. Since the day when he learned the fate of Diana Carrington, he has ceased to keep poisons as part of his stock in trade. Never will he sell poison again, be it opium, or whatever else, to any human soul.

No, not even to that favoured friend and client, Mr. Julius Lethwaite, if he were—which is most unlikely—to make application for a dose. This gentleman has by no means given up the practice of consulting the oracle, as interpreted by the gifted Cornelius, though nothing will induce him to confess that he really believes in the astrologer's powers. His visits, however, to the observatory are as frequent as of old, nor has even Jonathan Goodrich anything to say against the philosopher since the great day when he did such glorious service to the cause of justice, and helped to save the life of Gabrielle Penmore.

Mr. Lethwaite's principles remain much the same as ever, and he still challenges mankind to produce before him a single action done with an entirely clean motive. "Love of approval," and "the desire to have a finger in the pie," are, according to him, the great mainsprings to which most so-called good actions are traceable. His own recent exertions in behalf of his friends, the hero and heroine of this tale, he has, in every case, traced back with considerable skill to motives which are, to him, entirely satisfactory in their unsatisfactoriness. He still meets occasionally with instances of conduct which it is difficult to reconcile with his theory, and when, after a while, it came to his knowledge what Gabrielle had done in sooth-

ing the last hours of the woman who had so hated and injured her—then, indeed, he owned himself fairly puzzled. "The exception, which proves the rule," he said at last, evading the difficulty.

With regard to our friend's worldly affairs, it must be acknowledged that they are still involved in great uncertainty. The recent improvement in the aspect of American affairs has not yet led to the complete settlement of all the commercial difficulties which existed during the war. Whether that firm of Lethwaite and Goodrich will ever flourish in the city of London, remains to be seen, and the uncertainty by which that question is surrounded it is not at present in the power of the author to set at rest. Meanwhile, the senior partner in that, at present, mythical firm, continues to drum his way to musical fame night after night, and has already attained to such perfection in his peculiar branch of art, that the occasions are now rare indeed on which his leader is obliged to check his ardour with even so much as a reproachful glance.

CONCLUSION.

The last words which are to bring this story to a close alone remain to be spoken. Then we arrive at the end. If this tale, instead of being written, had been told vivâ voce to a circle of listeners, there would, now that the crisis is past, be a sort of buzz of talk about the circumstances of the narrative, and certain questions would infallibly be asked by some of those who had heard the tale narrated. We must be ready now with answers to any such possible questions, though, in truth, there remains not much more to be said.

There is a very old device of a fabulous and heraldic nature with which the reader is perhaps acquainted. It represents a bird, something of the eagle type, its head thrown back, and looking upward, its wings flung out in violent action, and the lower part of its body enveloped in the fire from which it is rising. This is the Phœnix, and the motto attached to the device is a very fine one. As you look upon the radiant creature, more glorious for the fiery trial through which it has passed, and rising magnificent out of the furnace, that motto, "Ex flammis clarior," seems to ring in your ears, wonderful in its appropriateness and beauty. "Brighter out of the flames." More splendid because of that fierce ordeal, you say to yourself, and then you think of trouble and its ennobling influence, of some such case as this with which we have been all this time occupying ourselves.

For brighter, beyond a doubt, and more glorious, have those two—that husband and wife whose fortunes we have followed so closely—emerged from the flame which has passed over them. That trouble is over now, and a season of great happiness follows it.

Not that either Gilbert Penmore or his wife were swift to recover from the after-effects of the suffering which they underwent. They have come out of the fire, no doubt, and are safe, but the flames have hurt them, nevertheless. The flames have burnt them not a little, and they carry scars about them which tell of bitter sufferings endured in the furnace. It was long before either of them could bear even to think of what had been; but in due time there came to her who had chiefly suffered, a source of consolation so great that it seemed to obliterate the very memory of the past, and caused it to appear at last like some half-forgotten dream. In ministering to a creature wholly helpless, wholly dependent on her, Gabrielle, the mother, absorbed in this new and wholesome interest, almost ceased to remember what she had suffered in the old time—as it soon seemed—when her child was not yet born to her.

But before that event took place, many things happened to distract Gabrielle's attention from the memory of what she had gone through. Friends sprang up on every side for this new martyr. Comparative strangers who could allege some such excuse as having once known her father or mother, came to call upon her, and some even who had no such excuse, and could only plead their anxiety to show some attention to one who had suffered in so uncommon a way. Immediately after the trial, the wife of that old judge in whom Gabrielle had felt such trust, came to her, and asked leave to be her friend. She proved so always.

It has been mentioned in a previous chapter, that when Governor Descartes and his wife heard of their daughter's terrible position, and of the peril that hung over her, they lost no time in making the necessary arrangements for a journey to England. The inevitable preparations and the journey itself, however, took some weeks, and, happily for them, the trial had come to a good end before they arrived. To see her parents again after so long a separation, was in itself no small delight to Gabrielle. And she saw them under happy circumstances. Between her and her mother there had till this time been an estrangement ever since Gabrielle's marriage. All such estrangement was now over, and the reconciliation between mother and daughter was complete. Trouble draws people wonderfully together, and we are not disposed to think severely of one who has newly escaped from a deadly peril. With her father, Gabrielle had always been a favourite, and the old gentleman's delight at seeing his daughter again, and that under such circumstances, was very affecting to see. The old governor talked very big about compensation, and actions for false imprisonment, and other legal proceedings in connexion with the late trial. But Gabrielle shook her head, and taking her father's hand in hers, besought him that the memory of that past horror might not be stirred again.

And now the time came when Gilbert, too, was to be rewarded for all his patient endurance and unrequited toil. That interview between him and the old judge, which took place immediately after the great trial was over, was not without its results. It was talked about in law circles. The old judge and the young barrister were not alone at that time; all sorts of official and other persons having occasion to be in the

room where the interview took place, waiting to speak with the justice on matters connected with his function. These spread the report far and wide of what had passed, not failing to exaggerate the praises which had been bestowed on the young lawyer, and the promises of assistance made by the worthy justice.

Such help, however, hardly came to be wanted. Gilbert Penmore had now, as the French say, given his proofs. He had shown that he could conduct a case, that he could keep his wits about him under circumstances the most trying that could possibly be conceived. It had been seen that his foreign accent was not a thing that need by any means stand in his way; a trifle, exciting some small amount of notice at first, but forgotten before a dozen sentences were spoken. Work poured in upon him faster than he could take it, and a time came when Gabrielle reminded him with a smile of what she had once —as the reader perhaps remembers—said in jest, that she would "certainly commit a crime some day or other, in order that he might conduct her defence and win a great name."

In short, this young couple soon began to prosper exceedingly. They did not remain in their old abode, where such heavy troubles had befallen them, but got away to new and pleasanter quarters, with which no painful memories were associated. It is only right, however, to mention, that wherever they went the faithful Charlotte accompanied them, and made herself useful in a great variety of ways.

But why do I go on? The essential is told. Who reads the last words of a story, or listens to the final speeches of a play—when the box-keepers stand ready with their canvas coverings to throw over the silk and gilding, and paterfamilias gets his young people together with prodigious noise, and wraps them well up before they face the night air?

The scenes will all have been shifted by the time that our curtain rises again next week, and a new piece will be presented, with fresh scenery and appointments, and an entirely new cast of characters.

THE END OF "AT THE BAR."

THE PLEASURES OF ILLNESS.

It is sometimes both pleasant and profitable to be ill.

You will observe I say "sometimes;" and, that I may not give any habitual sufferer occasion to shake a sad head in bitter derision of my postulate, I will add, "under certain conditions." If you be a person who "enjoys bad health," you will be inclined rather to say, with gentle sarcasm, that it is both pleasant and profitable to be sometimes well; if you be also poor and friendless, my philosophy will sound like mockery. I cannot offer much consolation to such as you—I wish I could—but I disclaim the imputation, which might be cast upon me, of being indifferent to your case, or of being like the cruel man who talks rapturously of rich feasts in the hearing of the hungry and the destitute. There are wounds too deep for my philosophy to salve, and to such wounds I will not presume to apply it.

It is to the strong, to those who fare sumptuously upon good health every day, that I address myself when I sing the praises of illness. I am not going to deal with the subject in the abstract. Not at all. I have just now been suffering from severe illness, and I deliberately say, that I enjoyed it.

You are mistaken if you think that it was merely a headache, a cold, or an attack of bile. It was an attack of acute rheumatism, and that is a complaint which even connoisseurs in illness will allow to be something worth talking about. I was laid up for nearly a month, I suffered continuous agony for two days and two nights, and during the rest of the time the pain, though mitigated in violence, continued to gnaw at my bones and muscles, rendering me at times perfectly helpless. To complete the statement of the case, my occupation is that of an author, and the chief seat of the disorder—which is a very mild word for it—was my right arm, including my right hand!

Yet I took pleasure in that attack of rheumatism; it did me a great deal of good. I profited by it. Before you call me a canting hypocrite, one word. I am not one of those who like to be despised, who rejoice in afflictions, who love to mortify myself, or to be mortified. As a miserable sinner that attack of rheumatism did not, so far as I am aware, do me any good whatever. In that respect I do not profit by whipping, I don't want the rod to remind me of my lessons. No. In the first place, I rejoiced in that rheumatism because it gave me a holiday. I could not have ventured to take a holiday if I had been well, but the rheumatism compelled me to take one. I could not write with my own hand, and I never tried dictation. So I made up my mind at once not to attempt any work. If it had been merely laziness or mental vacuity I should have struggled against it, and overcome it, as I had done often before. But it was downright physical incapacity. Work was impossible. I had orders for I don't know how many hundreds of bricks, but it was worse than being simply without straw—I had no hands.

It was just this having so many bricks to make that made me welcome the rheumatism. In these days we all work too much, and too fast. And it is the pace that kills—especially men who race with their brains. The daily, weekly, and monthly press is the most inexorable of all nigger-drivers. It has a lash of iron, and it lays it on by steam. When you *can* answer its crack you must, and continue to do so day after day, and week after week. It will allow of no intermittent efforts. You must run on, or fall out of the race. I did not fall out voluntarily; I was knocked out; and when I recovered the blow a little, I was thankful for it.

What a relief it was, when I had turned off the steam, and stopped the mill in the brain! It was not grinding very fine corn, perhaps, but

still it was grinding away as hard as millstones could go. And oats, I believe, wear out the material sooner than wheat. If I had not been knocked out of the race, I could not voluntarily have fallen out for a rest, until some time next autumn. In this way busy men may be thankful for an occasional illness, to save them from themselves.

I wonder if I shall find many readers to sympathise with me when I say that a continuance of good health sets me speculating in this manner—"What a long spell of health I have had! Half the winter gone and I have not caught cold—haven't had a cough, nor an attack of indigestion for ever so long. Surely I shall have something the matter with me soon." It is almost like longing to be ill. But nothing astonishes a weakly person, who has been accustomed to illness, so much as an unusually long period of good health. It is something he did not expect; it is like a gift to him. Robust persons who have never been accustomed to physical suffering, will find it difficult to understand this feeling. *Their* wonder is that they should ever be ill at all. I have noticed that the moral effect of illness upon the strong man is the moral effect of health upon the weak man. When a strong man is stricken down, he takes to his prayers. But the time when the weak man's thoughts are most elevated towards spiritual things is when he is well. The latter is too thankful to Heaven for its abundant mercies to begin whining the moment he is laid upon a bed of sickness. To my mind, that which induces a spirit of thankfulness is the best chastener of the heart. It is not a scourge, but a purifier. I have no belief in the rod, either moral or physical. When I am in health, and have the full enjoyment of all my faculties, and when the sun shines, and all nature is beautiful around me, then I am good. I cannot say that my heart is touched in the same way by affliction and gloom. It is not then in a spiritual way that I profit by illness, but simply because it enables me to throw off my cares as I throw off my clothes, and put my mind to rest with my body.

To descend to some common-place particulars, in illustration of the pleasures of illness, I will mention first of all the delight of being able to think without a purpose. When I am well, all my thinking must take a practical direction. I have no time to indulge in loose fancy. Whatever thoughts may enter my head I must mould and shape them for use. I must parcel them out, and pigeon-hole them. And there is the involute process of thinking about thoughts, overhauling the aforesaid mental pigeon-holes to see that everything is ready to hand, a process which is very wearing and painful. But sitting here by the fireside, utterly incapacitated, I give free rein to my fancy, and set myself to think about nothing. And when you don't try to think, what pleasant thoughts enter your head unbidden! You may call upon the divine Nine, or any other source of inspiration, until you are hoarse, without bringing down the pleasant fancy which pops upon you unasked for, like a fairy's gift. You sit by the fire with your feet among the cinders, staring vacantly at the coals, and a vision of beauty reveals itself in the flame. These are the pleasant day-dreams which the mind enjoys when it has an opportunity of playing the idler.

Another pleasure of illness is found in the opportunity which it affords you of reading books. Busy men, in these days, cannot afford time to read any but a very few of the best books. And perhaps no class has so little time for reading of a fanciful kind as the literary class. An author or a journalist is obliged to confine himself to works of the highest fame. He has just time enough, and barely, to make himself acquainted with the thoughts and feelings of the dii majores. The minores he must neglect altogether, until he is introduced to them by the leisure which is enforced by illness. What a deal of pleasant and profitable reading of this kind I got through during that month when I was laid up with rheumatism! At such times, too, one has leisure and inclination for old favourites, for Homer and Horace, Aristophanes and Terence, Don Quixote and Tristram Shandy. One cannot make up his mind to read good books when his head is full of business, or when he is in a hurry. I would not insult a favourite author of mine by reading him on the top of an omnibus or in a railway train. I give him all the honours of a cleanly swept hearth and a newly trimmed lamp. I wash my hands, I anoint my head, I put my mind in full dress, and then I am ready to receive him. But it is only when I am ill that I can render him full honour in this respect.

Not the least of my pleasures of illness is derived from the daily visits of the doctor. It is not every one, I know, who delights to have the doctor in the house; but I do. My doctor and I are peculiarly situated towards each other. We are on visiting terms, we belong to the same club, we go out on the spree together—very mild sprees; a visit to the theatre now and then, a pic-nic in the summer, an occasional Covent Garden supper, with harmony—we move in the same set, and know each other's tastes and habits intimately. My doctor knows that I believe very little in physic, and he wisely abstains from taxing the little faith I have in that regard. Besides, he is one of those sensible fellows who have great confidence in the virtues of juicy mutton and generous wine. When I call him in to prescribe for my cold, which I feel assured is going to lay me up for a week or two, does he order me physic and slops? No; he says, "Drink two glasses of sherry at once, have a good nourishing dinner, and go to bed early; meantime I'll send you something; but keep yourself warm, and take plenty of nourishment." And then we drop the professional subject, and talk about the last new book, or the last new play, until I quite forget that I am a patient, and he quite forgets that he is my medical adviser—for at parting he merely alludes to my malady with a "by-the-by."

As regards physic there is a tacit understand-

ing between us. My doctor knows, as I have said, that I have no great belief in pills and draughts, and he does not insist upon my swallowing much of that sort of stuff; but he sends the little bottles and boxes as a matter of form, and I receive them as a matter of form; and so we consider that we have done what is courteous towards each other as doctor and patient. I get well, and we tacitly give the physic the credit of the cure, though there are all the little bottles and boxes in a row on the mantelpiece untouched, except, perhaps, one or two "taken" in compliment to the art; just as one takes wine when challenged at dinner in obedience to the rules of etiquette. But though I have little or no faith in my physic, I believe in my doctor. He gives me sound advice, he tells me what to eat, drink, and avoid, he cheers me up, and feeds me up, and, what is most to the purpose, he gets me well. I have always had the greatest respect for his sense and candour ever since he admitted the virtues of a certain dose which I prescribed for myself. I was in fearful agony with rheumatic pains, and, physic being in vain, I drank off two stiff glasses of brandy-and-water. The brandy allayed the pain. I told my doctor so, and he said, "I have no doubt of it; brandy is an invaluable medicine, if people would take it only as a medicine."

But of course a doctor could not go about prescribing brandy-and-water. If he did, he would be open to the suspicion of being a travelling agent for a spirit-house.

I should be quite unhappy if I did not find occasion to call in my doctor at least once a year. He gives *me* a turn, and I feel bound to give *him* one. One good turn, you know, deserves another. I go to the doctor's house, and I find my book upon his table. He goes to see my plays, he takes in the periodicals to which I contribute. When I have been in good health for a long time, and the doctor says to me, "That is a capital book of yours," or "I like that article of yours very much," it goes to my conscience. Here he is, taking me in regularly every week, and I have not taken him in for months. When I find the account so heavy against me, I am almost tempted deliberately to go and sit in a draught and catch cold. So I was quite rejoiced the other day when that attack of rheumatism came on. Now, thought I, I shall be able to take in the doctor in daily numbers, and praise *his* articles. Here is a little work of his, each leaf containing an iron powder, from the bi-daily perusal of which I rise greatly refreshed. I make an exception in favour of this vigorous work, and swear by it, without any mental reservation whatever.

Thackeray, in one of the pleasantest of his satires—the continuation of Ivanhoe—makes his Wamba sing:

> Forty times over let Michaelmas pass,
> Grizzling hair the brain doth clear;
> Then you know a boy is an ass,
> Then you know the worth of a lass,
> Once you have come to forty year.

Now, as to the worth of a lass, I think there are occasions when you may be brought to have a full appreciation of *that*, before you come to forty year. This is another of my pleasures of illness—to be tended with gentle hands, to be comforted with gentle words, to be pillowed on a soft breast throbbing with love and forgiveness and tender pity. Then, when my man's strength is gone, and I am as weak and helpless as any child, I know how selfish men are, and what a deep pure well of devotion is a woman's heart. When we are full of health and strength we go away from home-women, go to our dinners, and our clubs, and amusements, leaving them to their dull domestic routine, sometimes keeping them waiting and watching for us through the weary night. They do certainly give us a bit of their mind occasionally—they would be perfect angels if they did not; but when sickness strikes us down, the harsh word is hushed into a whisper of sympathy, the angry eye melts with an expression of tenderness and pity. And with all their little injuries struggling with love upon their lips, they do not permit themselves to utter more than the gentle sarcasm:

"You cannot go to the club now, can you, dear?"

The man who has never been ill, has yet to become acquainted with some of the purest pleasures of existence.

A ROYAL POET.

King Oscar of Sweden is one of the most accomplished monarchs of Europe. His paintings, principally depicting the fine scenery of his country, are extremely beautiful. From his poems—they now lie before us in three small volumes—we give the two following, translated, at the request of the Queen-Dowager, by Mary Howitt. They were read this last summer before the court, by Herr Alberg, who gave in Stockholm a series of English readings—the English language being at this time greatly admired and studied in Sweden:

THE HEART'S HOME.

Where is thy home? Thus to my heart appealing
I spake. Say thou who hast had part
In all my inmost being's deepest feeling,
Where is thy proper home? Tell me, my heart!
Is it where peaceful groves invite to leisure,
And silvery brooklets lapse in easy measure?
No, no, my heart responded, no!

Where is thy home? Amid the tempests' anger,
And torrents leaping wild from rock to rock,
Where the bold hunter finds delight in danger,
And bleeding victims fall beneath his stroke?
Or is it 'mid the artillery's thundering rattle,
The clash of swords, the roar and rush of battle?
Calmly my heart made answer, No!

Where is thy home? Perchance where tropic splendour,
In golden luxury of light, calls forth
The purple grape; perchance, 'midst roses tender
Thou revellest in the beauty of the South.

Is that thy home, beneath the palm-tree shadows,
And ever-verdant summer's flowery meadows?
Still, still my heart made answer, No!

Where is thy home? Is it 'mid icebergs hoary,
The crags and snow-fields of the Arctic strand,
Where the midsummer's midnight sees the glory
Of sunset and of sunrise, hand in hand,
Where 'twixt the pine-trees gleams the snow-drift's whiteness,
And starry night flames with auroral brightness?
But still my whispering heart said, No!

Where is thy home? Is it within *her* presence,
Whose heart responsive pulses to thy love,
Who taught of suffering the divinest essence,
When hope was dead in life's sweet myrtle grove?
Is that the home in which thy wishes centre?
Yes, of a truth, the shrine which none may enter!
But mournfully again my heart said, No!

Where is thy home? Say if perchance it lieth
In that prefigured land of love and light,
Whither, they say, the soul enfranchised flieth
When earthly bonds no longer check her flight?
Is there thy home? Those unknown realms elysian
Which shine beyond the stars, a heavenly vision?
Then first my heart made answer, Yes!

There is my home, it said, with quick emotion;
My primal home to which I am akin.
Though earthly fires may call forth my devotion,
Yet I forget not Heaven's pure flame within.
Amidst the ashes still a spark surviveth,
Which ever yearneth heavenward, ever striveth
To be with God, who is my home!

AUTUMN FAREWELL TO DROTTNINGHOLM.*

The glorious summer sun already leaneth
Towards distant lands, and that resplendent glow,
Which, late at eve, flamed upward to the zenith,
No longer now the Norrland fields shall know.
And wood and mead, which, in their vernal gladness,
Laughed out to man beneath the azure sky,
Stand wan and sere, and clouds weep tears of sadness,
And even the little birds sit silent by.

Yet still how gratefully my memory treasures
The lovely peace of each sweet summer day,
When heaven itself brought down to earth its pleasures,
And winds their warfare changed to merry play;
When flowers sent up their offering of sweetness,
As incense to the God of day and night,
And lifted to the sun their fair completeness
Obedient to the holy law of light.

But all, alas! on earth is transitory,
And laughter changes soon to sorrow's tear;
As the green herb, anon, foregoes its glory,
So man advances onward to his bier.
Yet if the faithful heart have kept in clearness
The sunny moments of the passing day,
Still shall they cast amidst autumnal drearness
Of the lost summer a surviving ray.

Thus muse I, as my fond farewell is spoken,
Thou loveliest pearl beside the Mälar coast.
Nor shall sweet memory's bond 'twixt us be broken,
Where'er my bark on life's rough sea be tossed!
To thee my heart will yearn when sorrow shroudeth
My world of thought, and all is dark as night;
And if thick mist the future overcloudeth,
I will ascend unto the past delight.

Farewell ye hills and valleys, groves and meadows,
Where Flora scattered all her pomp abroad,
And elves amidst the full moon's lights and shadows
Traced magic rings in dances on the sward;
Thou shore, reed-garlanded, where softly stringing
His harp at eve the Necken charms the scene;
Thou wood, made musical with wild birds' singing,
And waters lapsing through the leafy screen.

Farewell thou starry eve, so oft reflected
In the still waters, where my light bark drove
The downward depth which still my gaze rejected,
Turning instead unto the heaven above;
Have thanks for all the quiet joy supernal,
Which in my heart's recess by thee was laid,
The whilst thy azure vault of truth eternal
Expanded as a blessing, o'er my head!

Farewell thou lovely scene! The heart's deep feeling
Gives forth these accents of my parting song!
Yet thou in memory wilt be sorrow's healing,
And speed the mournful winter night along;
I'll think of thee when autumn fogs are glooming,
Oh! Drottningholm, for still thy sun will shine;
Thou art to me in every season blooming,
And peaceful lilies round thy name entwine!

* Drottningholm is the Versailles of Sweden.

CARACAS TO VALENCIA.

The next thing was to settle whether I should proceed south to Valencia, or west to San Felipe, a town about forty miles from Puerto Cabello, where it was said that General Falcon had promised to attend at the consecration of a church. On inquiry I found that the route to Felipe lay through a treeless waste, where, if I went by day, I should be exposed to a sun that no European could encounter with impunity, while at night I should infallibly be stricken down by the fever, for which the coast of the Golfo Triste is infamous. Of two European engineers, who had been out on this route a few weeks before, one had died of sun-stroke, and the other was lying at the point of death from fever at Puerto Cabello. Besides, General Falcon's movements were so uncertain, that I thought it likely he might not come after all; and so, in fact, it turned out. On the other hand, if I went to San Felipe, I could easily go on to the copper-mines of Aroa, which I was desirous of visiting. These mines were worked for a time under the superintendence of Englishmen, with good results; but unfortunately one fine day the native miners took it into their heads that they had a grievance against the foreigners, so they fell on them suddenly, split their skulls with hatchets, and decamped with their property. For this cruel and cowardly deed some of the guilty parties were afterwards executed, but the mines were for a time abandoned, and the working of them had only lately been resumed. After some consideration I resolved to send a courier with a letter to General Falcon, and proceed myself to Valencia, whence, if requisite, I could go by a less unhealthy route to San Felipe.

At four P.M. on the 12th of August, I took leave of C. and my kind host, and started with a

friend and my servant Juan for Valencia. Just before we left, a creole, who wished to curry favour with C., rode up to us upon a magnificent mule, and said that he too was going to Valencia, that he observed I was indifferently mounted, and that he would, therefore, be very glad to accompany us, and lend me his mule whenever I got tired of my own. Having made the wished-for impression on C., this rusé individual started with us, but remained in our company for only about half a mile, and then set off over the heavy sandy road at a speed which our poor beasts could not rival. I found that my mule stumbled abominably, and I inwardly resolved to exchange animals with the polite creole, for a mile or two at least, on the first opportunity. We rode on, under a terrible sun, for five miles, through a dense swampy jungle, full of blue land-crabs and snares, to Palato, where there is a miserable hovel to represent a village, and where the sea reappears, not sluggish and sleeping, as at Puerto Cabello, but breaking on a wild coast in foaming surges. Here we sat down and smoked, and discussed the prospects of the railway from Puerto Cabello to San Felipe, the first station of which we knew would be at Palato, while from the same village another line would diverge to Valencia. Thus far we had gone west, but we now turned south, and began to ascend from the coast, rejoicing to emerge from the dense low jungle, through which we had hitherto been plodding. On our left, was a ravine, at the bottom of which flowed a small stream called the Rio del Ultimo Paso, or "Ne Plus Ultra River." About a mile to the east of Palato is the mouth of the Rio Agua Caliente, "Hot-water River," in which, according to Humboldt, the alligators are of uncommon size and ferocity. It is curious how these disgusting animals thrive in thermal springs, as at the Magar Talao in Lower Sindh, and other places in India.

After going a mile or two we came to a posada, and here whom should we see smoking indolently with his feet up on a bench, but our friend the creole, owner of the fine mule. As I was heartily sick of my own animal, and did not understand that creole promises meant nothing, I reminded him of his proposal, and said, "I should like to exchange mules for a mile or two." "With all my heart, señor," replied he, "but I have a little affair to settle with the landlord here. I will overtake you, before you have advanced a couple of miles; we will then not only exchange mules, but you shall, if you like, ride mine all the rest of the way to Valencia." As I rather misdoubted this arrangement, and was determined not to ride my own animal any more, I mounted Juan's in spite of his assuring me that I should lose by the change. After about half an hour we spied the courteous creole coming up at a great pace, and of course expected he would stop when he reached us. Instead of that, he had the effrontery to pass us like a flash of lightning, seeming not to hear our calls to him to pull up, but leaving for our benefit a cloud of dust, which drove directly in our faces, and which was the sole advantage that accrued to us from our interview with this polite individual at Puerto Cabello, and the courteous promises he there made to us. Even Juan, though used to the country, was rather scandalised at his behaviour, and could not refrain from shouting after him "Picaron! Embustero!" "Rogue, humbug," and other angry expressions, which no doubt afforded the creole immense amusement.

As we left the coast behind us the soil grew firmer, the pestilential smell ceased, and the jungle waxed higher and higher. Many lofty and beautiful trees now attracted our attention, especially palms, as the sago palm and the cocurito. Juan also pointed out to me the bread-fruit-tree—which looks in the distance as if some one had been hanging human heads on it—and the famous Palo de Vaca, or "cow-tree," which supplies a milk exactly like that of animals. There were also many fruits and flowers, very beautiful to look at, but some of them most poisonous, as the manzanilla, which resembles in appearance and pernicious effects a certain fruit that "brought death into the world and all our woe." The sun set, but a bright moon rose, and we jogged on pleasantly, though very slowly. A little after eight P.M. we saw, not quite a mile off, the lights of the village of Camburé, which is only seven miles from Palato, so tardy had been our progress, and so often had we stopped to smoke, to look at flowers and trees, and to discuss the proper line for the railway to Valencia. Seeing the village so near, I lagged behind to light another cigar: not an easy matter with the bad matches of the country. While I was absorbed in this undertaking, my mule gave a violent start, which almost sent me off my equilibrium, and began to run at a pace of which I had not before thought it capable. Pulling at the reins with both hands, I looked over my shoulder, and saw a large animal leap into the road behind me, stand for a moment or two, and then pass into the thicket on the other side. Presently a savage roar from the jungle about fifty yards to my right, told me what sort of animal it was, and set my mule galloping on towards the village, at a speed which I now did not attempt to check. In a minute or two I was met by Juan, who came hurrying back to meet me. "Did you hear anything?" I asked. "Yes, yes," replied Juan, "I heard. It's a tiger, sure enough. They don't often attack men, but this one must be hungry, or he would not come so near the village; so we had better get to the posada as soon as possible." We pushed on accordingly, but before we reached the village we heard the jaguar, for such it was, roar repeatedly in the jungle behind us, and, to judge by the sound, he seemed to be following in our wake.

Camburé is a village of about forty houses, or rather hovels, in the midst of a very dense jungle, and with a deep ravine to the east. At the bottom

of this ravine runs a stream, in which there are alligators, for Humboldt saw one nine feet long near the village. On the night of our arrival the place happened to be quite full of people, some on their way to Valencia, and others, chiefly natives of St. Thomas, who had come out from Puerto Cabello for a drinking-bout. Up to the hour of our arrival, these merry folks had been bringing themselves up to the right pitch of excitement, and being now thoroughly intoxicated, they began to dance furiously to music which strongly reminded me of the Indian tom-toms. I stood for some time looking at their performances, while Juan was bargaining for a room with the landlord of the posada, whose house was already crammed, but who, at the sight of a handful of dollars, unceremoniously ejected some of his guests for our accommodation. As for the merry-makers whose proceedings I was watching, two of them would stand up at a time and dance frantically a sort of jig, with the perspiration streaming from their faces, until they were quite exhausted, when they sat, or rather tumbled down, and were succeeded by two others, who imitated their example. When I was tired of this, and of looking at some very pretty creole ladies who sat outside the door of one of the houses, dressed in white, as if for a ball, I entered the posada, which I found alive with fleas, and reeking with garlic. After a miserable dinner I turned into my hammock, but not being used to that kind of bed, I was almost immediately deposited on the floor on the other side, to the great delight of Juan, who, however, instructed me how to conduct myself so as to avoid such an ignominious ejectment for the future.

Next morning we were up by four A.M., and after I had packed, and paid eight dollars for our miserable fare, and had got myself covered with black ants which bit furiously, we started. The road continued to ascend, and the hills on either side grew higher and higher, and the ravines deeper, till we came to Trincheras, or "The Trenches," a village so called, because some French freebooters, who sacked Valencia in 1677, halted there and entrenched themselves. It was twenty minutes past eight before we reached Trincheras, though it is but six miles from Camburé, and there we stopped and smoked, and I chatted with some women, who received my remarks with most extraordinary empressement, for which I was quite at a loss to account. Close to Trincheras are some very celebrated thermal springs, said by Humboldt to be the second hottest in the world. Of course we inquired about them at the posada, but, strange to say, the people could not tell us exactly where the springs were. At last, a man who was going to Valencia volunteered to guide us to them, and we set off. After riding a few hundred yards, we came to two or three cottages, all the inmates of which issued forth, and went down on their knees to me. I was petrified by this extraordinary procedure, but Juan irreverently bursting into a peal of laughter, called out, "Do you see that? May I be hanged if they don't take you, sir, for the archbishop, who is expected here on his way to consecrate the church at San Felipe! It is your hat with the turban round it, a head-dress they have never seen before, which they take to be part of an archbishop's travelling costume." I now began to understand why the women at the posada had been so deferential, and was not a little dismayed at finding myself figuring as the head of the orthodox church in Venezuela.

Our volunteer guide to the hot springs, soon after we had passed these cottages, bade us alight and follow him into the jungle, which we did; but after struggling through thorns and thick bushes, and wading in muddy pools to no purpose, we had to return to the road, without being able to find the springs, minus parts of our garments, and plus pounds weight of mud, which no effort could dislodge from our boots. This failure was several times repeated, and it really seemed that, having come thousands of miles to Trincheras, we should have to quit the spot without seeing what we had heard so much about. At last a man arrived from the neighbouring cottages, and led us down to the place we wanted to see, which is but fifty yards from the road; but the jungle is so thick, that without a guide no one would be able to discover it; and it would be well if some mark to show where it is, were set up for the convenience of travellers. The springs are situated in a hollow of about one hundred yards diameter, which has evidently once been the crater of a volcano. Through this hollow flows a rivulet, two feet deep, and never less than eighteen feet wide in the greatest drought. Steam ascends from the surface of the water, the temperature of which, according to Humboldt, is above ninety degrees. In some places it must be very much above that point, for the guide stepped with his bare feet into one part that was so hot as to make him skip out again with surprising agility and a doleful countenance, swearing that he had been scalded by it. The bed of the stream is coarse-grained granite, but there is a good deal of mud. The vegetation grows quite rankly all around this Stygian water, and clusias, mimosas, and aroms especially thrive in it. At forty feet from the hot stream is a rivulet of cold water. Altogether it is a very curious place, and worthy of a more lengthened visit than we were able to pay it.

From Trincheras the road continues to ascend through a lovely forest, bright with fruits and flowers. The turns are in places very sharp, overlooking deep ravines. After three miles, we arrived at what is called the Entrada, or "entrance," which is the highest point between Puerto Cabello and Valencia, being probably about eighteen hundred feet above the sea. Half a mile beyond, the jungle ends, and the road enters a beautiful salubrious valley, about twenty miles broad, with grass and trees, as in England, but without jungle. Here we put up some fine coveys of quails. Two miles further on, we came to the village of Nagua Nagua, and, as it was half-past

ten, and the sun terribly hot, we were glad to take refuge in the posada. In the room into which they showed us, there were three very rough sofas, whereon we gladly threw ourselves, and were rather astonished, on going away, to find that we were charged for three beds, though we did but lie down for a few hours in the daytime. As for rest, that was out of the question, for the flies covered our faces and hands in countless numbers, and effectually barred sleep. At one P.M. we were called to dinner, and sat down with a goodly company of drovers and others, who were doing the journey to Valencia on foot.

As for myself, the smell of the garlic was quite enough, and I retreated, without tasting a morsel, to my sofa. Even there I was not left in peace, for fowls, dogs, and even pigs, kept wandering into the room; and in my sorties to drive out these intruders, I discovered the cause of the immense number of flies. All along the verandah in rear of the apartments the worthy posadero had hung up in rows joints of meat, some of which were quite black. The odour of these pieces of flesh overpowered even that of the adjoining stable-yard, and brought all the insects of the neighbourhood to the spot. I should have left the place without eating, had not a creole woman offered me a large sweetmeat made of *membrillo*, or "quince," which I greedily devoured. Our bill was seven dollars, or about two-and-twenty shillings, for the use of the room and the abominable food, which Juan had the courage to masticate, but the very smell of which I could not endure. At three P.M. a rumbling coach drove up, and took away the shoemaker's wife who had given me the quince, and her family; and as the road was blocked up for a bull-fight, they had to make a détour over such rough ground as to threaten the old vehicle with destruction at every moment. We soon followed, and rode the five miles that remained to Valencia in an hour.

The country was lovely with the richest natural vegetation, and, here and there, coffee estates and sugar plantations. There are so many trees and gardens round Valencia, that the city is almost concealed from view until it is entered. However, long before we reached the streets, we passed bevies of pretty creole ladies, promenading or sitting in the open air, in front of posadas resembling tea-gardens in England. Among these groups, my hat with the turban still continued to create a sensation, and though they were too civilised to take me for an archbishop, the mistakes they made about me, as I afterwards heard, were scarcely less ridiculous. On arriving in Valencia, we made our way to the Gran Plaza, and alighted at a posada called La Belle Alliance, which had no upper story, and no comfortable room of any kind. I was shown into a gloomy apartment without a window, and with one great folding-door. When this door was closed, I was obliged to light a candle, but it was impossible to keep the door shut long, without being stifled. We had to wait several hours before the dinner we had ordered could be got ready, and when it did appear, although our appetites were keen, we could not induce ourselves to touch anything, except some boxes of sardines and a dish of potatoes. On going to bed, I found it impossible to sleep, from the suffocating closeness of my room, and I passed the night in vowing that as soon as morning came, I would cease to be a member of La Belle Alliance.

DADDY DODD.

John Beadle was an honest man, with a large family and a small shop. It was not a hopeful circumstance in John's position that, while his family kept on enlarging, the shop obstinately maintained its contracted dimensions; that, while there seemed to be no bounds to the race of Beadle, the business which maintained them was strictly limited. John's shop was situated in one of the many by-streets, with no main thoroughfare among them, which constitute Somers Town, and it was devoted to the sale of coals and vegetables. As a householder, John, though in a small way of business, was a person of some importance, inasmuch as he was the sole lessee of an entire tenement. It was something to boast of in that neighbourhood, but not much; for the roof which John called his own was a broken-backed roof, and covered only one floor besides the basement, which formed the emporium. The tenement seemed to be fast sinking into the earth. The impression of the beholder was that one story had already sunk, and that the others were rapidly following it; so that it seemed probable that in a few years there would be nothing visible but the broken-backed roof lying flat on the spot, a monument of departed commerce in coals. Meantime, by the agency of two upright beams and one transverse one, the broken-backed roof was kept over the heads of John and his family.

John's family consisted of his wife Martha, seven children, and Martha's old father. All these, including the old man, who was past work, and utterly without any means of his own, were dependent upon the exertions of John, aided, when urgent family affairs would permit, by his wife. John's exertions were divided between chopping firewood, taking out hundreds (more frequently half-hundreds) of coals on a truck, and "moving." The occupation of "moving" may be described as going to houses about quarter-day, wrestling with chests of drawers, sofas, four-post bedsteads, and other heavy articles of furniture, and getting very little money, but a good deal of beer. If John had been a pelican of the wilderness he might have nourished his family upon beer for a week after a moving; but he was only a man, and could do little more than find them a bit of supper with the single shilling which was generally all his reward in available currency.

The door and the window of the shop being always open, the nature and extent of John's stock in trade were patent to the world. It

consisted of about a ton of coals—which generally ran small—heaped up in a corner, a little pile of firewood, a few strings of onions, a few bunches of greens, a basket or two of potatoes, a box of red herrings, a bottle of peppermint-stick alluringly displayed with some marrowless nuts and wizened apples on a board outside the window, and a bed-wrench. This last instrument was a wonderful auxiliary to John's other resources. While the two upright beams and the single transverse beam were the support of the emporium architecturally, the bed-wrench was the prop of the emporium commercially. It was a thing not to be bought, but borrowed; and the charge for the loan of that bed-wrench was twopence. Chaldron-street was given to borrowing, and it seemed to be a street which did not lie easy in its bed, for it was always taking its bed down and putting its bed up again, the result being that John's bed-wrench was in constant and urgent demand. Such has been the eagerness to secure the instrument, that two rival applicants have been known actually to wrench each other in the effort to possess it.

One half of John's shop was occupied by the stock, the other half formed the ordinary sitting-room. This latter room had a fireplace, surmounted by a mantelshelf, on which stood several works of art in china; and its furniture consisted of two or three Windsor chairs and a small round table. Little active domesticity was ever witnessed in this department except at the close of the day, when the family, coming from the coals and the potatoes and the firewood, made a rush at the little round table, and scrambled for herrings and thick bread-and-butter and tea. At such times old Daddy, Martha's superannuated father, was to be seen sitting in an arm-chair by the side of the fire, his bald head encircled by a glory of onions, and the coals rising on his right like a distant mountain range, put in as a background to the picture. Those family banquets were sharp and short. All unnecessary conveniences of luxury, such as knives and forks, slop-basins, and the like, were dispensed with. Each one as he finished his cup of tea turned round and threw the dregs upon the heap of coals, and, when he had finished picking his herring, turned the other way and flung the bones into the fire. After the meal, Mr. Beadle was accustomed to sit down opposite old Daddy, while Martha drew up between them, and devoted herself to the mending of the family linen; but as the number of chairs was limited, the younger branches of the family usually reclined, in the classic fashion, among the coals, from contact with which they derived a swarthiness of complexion which caused them to be known in the neighbourhood as the "black Beadles." John and Martha loved their offspring dearly, and would not have had anything happen to one of them for the world; but they began to find that they were increasing both in numbers and in appetite in a ratio altogether disproportionate to the development of the trade in coals and vegetables, notwithstanding that the rolling stock had been increased by a new truck and a second bed-wrench. John's ambition had often taken a run at a horse and cart; but it had never been able to vault so high, and always fell back upon the truck and hurt itself in the region of its dignity. A truck is not a glorious kind of vehicle—especially a coal-truck. It is a vehicle that takes the pavement rather than the middle of the road, for choice, and although the thunder which it makes as it traverses the coal-traps on the pavement is considerable, it is not a source of pride to its owner. Besides, it does not warrant the assumption of that sceptre of authority, a whip; and it is usually propelled by one of the human species. Well, it would never do if we all had the same ambition. While some persons aspire to rule their fellow-men, there are others who prefer to exercise authority over the brutes in driving a horse and cart. This was John's case. A horse and cart, with a corresponding increase of business, and a drive down the road to the Jolly Butchers on Sunday afternoon, with the missus in all her best by his side, and the kids with their faces washed behind, like a pen of clean little pigs—this had been the dream of John's life; but it was a dream that had not yet come true. Indeed, so far from this, John's prospects were becoming darker than brighter every day.

"What was to be done?"

This question, which had long suggested itself both to John and Martha, found audible expression one night, after the black Beadles had scampered away to their holes for the night. Old Daddy Dodd was sitting dozing in his chair by the side of the fire, and John and Martha were sitting opposite.

It was John who propounded the question:

"What was to be done?"

Martha made no audible reply; but, after a pause, raised her eyes to John's face, and then looked across significantly at Daddy.

John shook his head, and covered his face with his hand.

"I have no right to ask you to do it any longer, John," Martha said. "I had no right ever to expect you to do it."

"But it was my duty and my pleasure to do it, Martha," John replied. "He's your father, and I couldn't see the poor old man starve!"

"But he needn't *starve*, you know, John," Martha said; and her lips trembled as she said the words.

"I know what you mean," John returned; "but I can't bear the thoughts of it. It's not what ought to be, when he's had a house of his own and drove his own chay, and paid rates and taxes, and every comfort."

"Well, it *is* hard, when you think of it," Martha replied, sadly; "and the drawing-room that we had, too, and the silver spoons, and the real china cups and saucers!" And at the thought of the china cups and saucers Martha dropped a tear.

"Yes, it is hard," John returned; "and that's why I have stood between him and *it* as long as I could."

"But you can't stand between him and *it* any longer, John, and I mustn't ask you to; it's not fair to you, John, and you shan't be burdened with him any longer."

Poor old Daddy was sitting dozing in his chair, blissfully unconscious of these deliberations, of which he was the subject. In his time Daddy had been in a good, though small way of business, in the carpentering line, combined with a little undertaking (which he undertook in his overtime, to oblige friends), and he had brought up a large family decently; but his sons, who might have been a help to him in his declining years, emigrated, and died in foreign parts; and when the infirmities of age began to creep upon the old man, and he was no longer able to work with his own hands, he disposed of his business at an alarming sacrifice, and retired to live on his means. His means were small, but his remaining years were few; and proceeding on his philosophical calculation, Daddy lived upon the principal instead of the interest (which he could not have lived upon at all), and lived longer than he calculated. Although Daddy disposed of his business, and let the carpenter's shop, he still continued to occupy the dwelling-house of which it formed a part, and this led many to believe that the old carpenter was pretty well off. His daughter Martha shared in this impression, and was rather disposed to boast of the independent gentleman, her father, and cherish expectations of an inheritance.

One day, about two years after Martha had been married to John Beadle, and shortly after she had prodigally presented John with the second pledge of her affection, old Daddy arrived at the emporium suffused with smiles. Martha thought he was going to present baby with the silver spoons. When the old man had settled himself in a chair, and recovered his breath, he said, with a pleasant chuckle,

"I've got something to tell you, Martha."

"What is it, father?"

"Well, Martha, I've been looking in the top drawer, and—and——"

"Yes, father, yes," said Martha, eagerly, making quite sure now that baby was to have the spoons.

"I've been looking in the top drawer," the old man repeated, "and—and——"

"The spoons," Martha suggested, as dutifully helping her poor old father in a difficulty.

"No, not the spoons, Martha," he said, "the money."

"What about the money, father?"

"It's all gone, Martha!"

"All gone! The money you've got to live upon, father," cried Martha, hysterically, "all gone?"

"Every farden," said the old man.

Martha could not believe it. She gave baby to a neighbour to mind, and insisted upon the old man going back with her to his lodging immediately. He gave her the key, and she tore open the top drawer in a frantic way. She seized the canvas bag in which the old man kept his money (for he had an unconquerable distrust of banks), and plunged her hand into it. She could feel nothing like coin. She turned the bag inside out and shook it, nothing fell out of it. She rummaged among the useless odds and ends in the drawer, and not a farthing could she find. Suddenly she paused and said,

"You've been robbed, father. Somebody's been at the drawer."

"No, no, my dear, you mustn't say that; nobody's been at the drawer but me. I've spent it all. There wasn't much of it, only eighty pounds altogether, and it wouldn't last for ever. It's me that's lived too long, Martha;" and the old man sat down in a chair and began to whimper and weep.

Martha could only sit down and weep too. She was overwhelmed by the thought of her father's destitution and the prospect which lay before him in his weak old age. His money was all gone, and his few sticks of furniture, with the silver spoons, which were the only portion of his plate which remained, would scarcely realise enough to bury him.

This was sad news to tell John when he came in (from a moving job) to his dinner. Martha, by way of breaking it gently to him, hysterically shrieked out the tidings at the top of her voice as John was coming in at the door.

"Oh, John, father's money's all gone," she cried.

Seeing that Martha was in a dreadful state of excitement about the matter, John, with a proper appreciation of artistic contrast, took the unwelcome announcement coolly.

"Well," he said, "in that case *we* must keep him. He has nobody else to look to."

And so one day John went over to Daddy's house, sent for a broker and disposed of all the things except the old man's bed, which he despatched by the truck to the emporium. That done, he locked the door, sent the key to the landlord, and taking the old man by the hand, led him to the shelter of the broken-backed roof. Putting him into the old arm-chair by the fire, and patting him kindly on his bald head, he said:

"There, Daddy, consider yourself at home—provided for for the rest of your life."

So it happened that John and Martha were burdened with old Daddy Dodd, in addition to their own numerous offspring. And Daddy *was* a burden, though neither John nor Martha ever said so, even to each other. He was an expensive old man, for though he did not eat much, and was well content to share a bedroom with the boys, he had, considering his circumstances, an unreasonable passion for snuff; and a glass of "six ale," punctually every morning at eleven o'clock, was absolutely necessary to his existence. The glass of six ale he *would* have, and he would have it nowhere but in the public-house, standing at the pewter bar, according to a custom which he had most religiously observed for more than forty years. One of the inconveniences of this requirement was that the old man had to be provided every morning with three-halfpence in current coin of the realm; and another, which followed in the course of time, when the old man became de-

crepid and feeble, was that some one had to take him to the particular public-house on which alone he would bestow his patronage (half a mile distant), and bring him back again.

Still no word of complaint escaped either John or Martha, until their family increased to that extent when every halfpenny became, as Martha said, an "object." The crisis arrived that night, when John, in general but significant terms, asked his good wife what was to be done.

"It is not fair to you, John," Martha said, "and you shan't be burdened with him any longer." And, while the old man sat dozing in his chair, all unconscious, it was resolved between them, after a hard struggle on John's part and many silent tears on Martha's part, that John should next day put old Daddy into the workhouse. The resolution was taken, and the old man slept on. Neither John nor Martha had the courage to wake him. They were afraid that he might read their terrible intentions towards him in their guilty faces. "I cannot do it, Martha," John said; and he made an excuse to go out of doors to smoke his pipe. Martha could not do it either, and sat waiting for the old man to wake, and presently he woke and called for her. She had withdrawn into the shade, and he could not see her with his dim old eyes.

"Martha," he said, "where are you? Come here and let me tell you what I've been dreaming about. Such a pleasant dream, my dear, about the old days when you was all at home! I thought I saw you all round the table eating your Christmas dinners; and there was turkey and plum-pudding and all the nice things that we used to have, you know; and then I dreamt that I was taking you to the boarding-school, where you was for a twelvemonth, you know; and—and, as we was driving down the Edgeware-road in the chaise, John came up and wanted to borrow five pounds, just as he used to do, you know, and, and I lent it him, just as I used to do, and—and—but what's the matter with you, Martha? you're not crying, surely."

Poor old man, he little knew what thorns he was planting in his daughter's breast. She *was* crying, but she hid her tears, and said kindly it was time for him to go to bed.

So, taking him by the hand, and leading him to his room, she put him to bed and tucked him up like a child.

When Martha went down-stairs again, John was timidly peeping in at the door.

"Have you put him to bed, Martha?" he inquired.

"Yes, John."

"Do you think he suspected anything?"

"Oh no, poor old dear."

"No, of course not, Martha," John said, "he would never dream that we could be such monsters—but did he say anything?"

"Yes, he said, 'God bless you, Martha, and God bless John, for all your kindness.'"

John, whose heart was much too big for his other faculties, withdrew his head from the door, and vented his smitten feelings in a howl.

John and Martha crawled up to bed that night with the sense of a premeditated crime weighing upon their souls. As they passed the room where the old man lay, they turned away their faces.

Next morning Martha dressed her old baby in his best clothes, crying over him all the while, and hiding her tears as best she could. Daddy wanted to know if it was Sunday, that they were putting on his best things, and Martha could not answer. Every innocent word he uttered was a reproach to her. She could not look at him at breakfast-time, neither could John.

When breakfast was over, John said to the old man, in as cheerful a tone as he could command,

"Grandfather, I'm going to take you for a walk."

"That's kind of you, John," said the old man —"very kind."

"Well, come along, grandfather; here's your hat and stick."

"I'm ready, John, quite ready. Eh? bless me, what's the matter now, my dear?"

Martha had her arms round his neck, kissing him.

"Good-bye, father," she said, through her sobs, "good-bye."

She had resolved not to say it, but she couldn't help it.

"Tut, tut, my dear," said the old man, "we are not going far. Are we, John?"

"No, grandfather, not very far."

"And we'll come back soon, won't we, John?"

"Oh yes, grandfather," John said; and the words almost choked him.

Martha whispered to the children to go and shake hands with their grandfather; and wondering what this unusual ceremony meant, they did as they were told, quietly and silently.

The old man was as much puzzled as the children, and wanted to know if it was a birthday. John could not answer him; his heart was full and his utterance choked. Without another word he took the old man by the hand, and led him from the house; and Martha stood in the doorway, surrounded by the children, looking after them sadly through her tears. It was barely a quarter of a mile to the workhouse, but it was a long journey for Daddy, who was getting very frail now. He dropped his stick very often, and John had to stoop and pick it up for him, and there were dangerous crossings to pass, where it was necessary for John to signal to drivers of vehicles to draw up and slacken speed until he carried the old man safely over to the other side of the road. Poor old Daddy, going to the workhouse, was highly honoured that day. The stream of traffic stayed its current and diverted its course to let him pass. It could not have done more for the Lord Mayor. At length John, leading his unconscious charge by the hand, arrived in front of the workhouse gates. At the sight of the gloomy portal and the high black wall, which shuts in life and shuts out hope, his resolution began to fail him. He stopped and hesitated.

"Grandfather," he said, "it's about time for your glass of ale, ain't it?"

"Well, yes, John, I think it's getting on that way," said the old man, in a cheery tone.

"Will you take it here?" John asked.

"Is this the Nag's Head?" the old man inquired.

The Nag's Head was the house which he had "used" for forty years.

"No, grandfather," John said; "this is not the Nag's Head; but they keep a good glass of ale here."

"Well, just as you like," Daddy assented.

So John took the old man into a public-house opposite the workhouse gates, and gave him the usual three-halfpence; for it was Daddy's pride always to pay for his liquor with his own hand. While Daddy was sipping his ale, John tossed off a couple of glasses of spirits: he was trying to screw his failing courage to the point. When the old man had finished his glass, John took him once more by the hand, and hurriedly led him across the road. He was at the gate, hesitating, with a full heart, looking through a mist of tears at the handle of the workhouse bell, inviting only the clutch of despair, when the old man looked up in his face and said:

"John!"

"Yes, grandfather."

"Ain't this the workhouse?"

Daddy's look, his intimation that he knew where he was, the thought that he suspected his design, struck John to the heart; and he hurried the old man away from the gate.

"The workhouse, grandfather, no, no!" John said; "what made you think of that? Come, come away, come away; we're going home, grandfather, going home as fast as we can."

John was so anxious to drag Daddy away from the spot, that he fairly lifted him off his legs and carried him across the road. In his excitement and haste he quite forgot Daddy's feebleness, and hurried him along at such a rate that the old man lost his breath, and was nearly falling. It was not until a street had been put between them and the workhouse, that John relaxed his speed and allowed Daddy to recover himself. After that he led him gently back to the emporium, took him in, and replaced him in his old chair by the fireside.

"I couldn't do it, Martha," he said; "my hand was on the bell, when he looked up at me and spoke to me; and his look, and what he said, struckme to the heart. I couldn't do it. I felt as if I was going to murder the poor old man. It's worse than murder, Martha, to put a fellow-creature in yonder; it's burying him alive!"

"But, John——"

"I say it shall never be done by me, Martha," John interposed, sternly. "We must do the best we can for him, and strive to the last to save him and ourselves from that disgrace."

An interchange of looks sealed the compact between them—that Daddy was to have a home with them while they had a roof to call their own, and a loaf of bread to share with him.

Old Daddy had not only been a considerable expense to John and Martha, but during the winter months he had been much in the way. He was always pottering about in the shop, which being also the sitting-room, did not afford much scope for business and domesticity combined. But now the fine days were coming, and Daddy would be able to spend a good deal of his time out of doors. So, when the fine days came, little Benjy, John's youngest but two, who was not old enough to be of any assistance in the business, was appointed to the sole and undivided duty of minding grandfather, and taking him for walks, when it was convenient to get him out of the way. Little Benjy, a little, large-headed, wise-looking boy of six years, was Daddy's especial pet and favourite; or, perhaps, it might have been said, so much more responsible a person was Benjy, that Daddy was *his* pet and favourite. Be that as it would, they loved each other, and on fine days, when the sun shone, it was their delight to wander hand in hand among the neighbouring streets, prattling together like two children, and gazing in, with child-like wonder, at the pretty things in the shop windows. The people round about called them the Babes in the Wood, and old Daddy was certainly as much a babe as Benjy. He took the same interest in the contents of the toy-shops, and sighed as deeply as Benjy sighed to think that his youthful guardian could not become the possessor of a much-coveted toy-gun (with a pink stock), which went off with a spiral spring. In their wanderings, day by day, the Babes saw many strange things, and studied the wonders of Somers Town with the deepest interest. It was their special delight to stand before any open door or window, which afforded them a view of a process of manufacture. They stood on gratings and listened to the rattle of sausage-machines "that went by steam," Benjy informed his charge and pupil, who was not very well up in the modern arts and sciences; they gazed at the little men in shirt-sleeves and flat caps, who turned a miniature coffee-mill under a glass case at the grocer's—such industrious little men, who always kept on grinding whether their master was in the shop or not, and never seemed to go home to their meals. They superintended the lowering of barrels into public-house cellars, learning the mysteries of the inclined plane, and speculating as to whether the barrels contained the particular kind of six ale which grandfather liked; they watched the making of shoes and the turning of wood, and were sometimes observed to be much absorbed in the flaying of sheep, a process which had a deep abstract interest for Benjy, while it set Daddy babbling about the delights—to him now purely visionary—of a boiled leg of mutton and caper sauce.

In these wanderings Benjy was careful not to release his hold of Daddy's hand, for he was particularly enjoined never to leave him for a moment, and whatever he did not to let him tumble down. One muddy day Benjy *did* let Daddy tumble, and a sad state of mind he was in for fear his mother should find it out. He did his best with his little cotton pocket-handkerchief to efface all traces of mud from Daddy's trousers: but he was afraid lest the old

man might "tell on him." Not that there was any want of loyalty between them, but Daddy was getting so garrulous, that he sometimes, quite unintentionally, let out things which got Benjy into trouble; so, when anything happened, Benjy was obliged to remind grandfather that he was not to tell.

"You won't tell mother that I let you fall in the mud, will you, grandfather?" he would say, as they bent their steps homeward.

"Oh no, Benjy," the old man protested. "I —I shan't say a word about it."

At first, before complete confidence had been established between them, Benjy sought on one occasion to purchase his grandfather's silence with a penny (which he did not at that moment possess, but expected to have some day), but he had come to know now that the bond of love between them was strong enough to sustain their mutual devotion, except when it was occasionally loosened by an inadvertence, or a lapse of memory, which, in Daddy's case, was beyond the power of either love or money to control. Going home in the summer evenings, after their rambles, Daddy and Benjy had deeply interesting tales to tell the family of the wonders of the great world of Somers Town.

Alas, that those relations should so often have fallen upon indifferent ears! But John and Martha were becoming sullen and moody, a prey both of them to the deepest anxiety. The family was still increasing, but the business continued to resist all efforts in the direction of development. John was getting into debt at the coal wharf, and at the potato warehouse. The times were hard, and were coming on harder with the approach of winter. Coals were at eighteenpence a hundred, potatoes at a penny a pound. The poor people couldn't pay the price. Poor women came for a few pounds of coal and took them away in their aprons. There was scarcely any use for the truck. When coals were so dear and fires so small, Chaldron-street was a good deal given to warm itself in its bed, which thus became a permanent institution. The consequence to John was that his bed-wrench rusted in idleness, and in view of the oxyde which accumulated upon it, it might be said to have been engaged in the diastrous occupation of eating its head off. The fortunes of the emporium were at a very low ebb; John and Martha could scarcely provide bare food for the family. The black Beadles, clamouring for victuals, and not finding satisfaction at the little round table, passed like a cloud of locusts over the stock in the shop, and making short work of the carrots, attacked even the cabbage-leaves and the turnip-tops. John and Martha were denying themselves day after day, that the old man might have a bit of something nice and nourishing. But things were coming to a crisis now. The coal-merchant, the potato-merchant, and the landlord, all three threatened process, and John was in hourly expectation of an execution. All his striving had been of no avail to save "him and them from that disgrace." It must come now. Nothing could avert it.

One afternoon John was sitting on a stool, on the site of the mountain of coal, which had been removed to the last shovelful of dust (and, alas! the capitalist at the wharf had not the faith to replace it), utterly dejected and dispirited. It was a terrible trial for a strong man with a stout heart and a vigorous will, to be thus beaten down and trampled under the feet of a cruel and relentless Fortune, whom he had wooed with all his art, and wrestled with all his strength. Poor John had received so many heavy falls, that the spirit was almost crushed out of him. When he looked up and saw a strange man darkening his door, he felt that the last blow was about to be struck.

"Come in," he said; "don't stand upon any ceremony, I beg; I'm quite prepared for you."

"Are you?" said the man, curiously.

"Yes, I am," John replied. "I know your errand as well as you do yourself."

"Do you?" said the man, in the same tone.

"Do you come here to mock me?" cried John, angrily, rising and facing the intruder; "to mock me as well as ruin me."

"Mock you?" said the man.

"Yes, mock me," John repeated, in the same angry tone.

"I did not come here to mock you; far from it," the man returned. "In fact, my business is not with you at all. I came to see Mr. Dodd, who was an old neighbour of mine."

"I beg your pardon, sir," said John. "You'll excuse me, I hope; but we are in great distress, and I expected nothing but bad news."

"If I am not mistaken," said the stranger, "it is good news I bring you. You are Mr. Dodd's son-in-law, are you not?"

"I am, sir, and I wish I were a richer son-in-law for his sake," John replied.

"Perhaps there will be no need for that, *for his sake*," the stranger returned.

"What do you mean?" John asked.

"Well, just this," said the stranger. "A few days ago I noticed an advertisement in the paper, addressed to Daniel Dodd, informing him that if he applied to Mr. Johnson, solicitor, in Bedford-row, he would hear of something to his advantage. Now, thinking that the Daniel Dodd wanted might be my old neighbour, and knowing Mr. Johnson, of Bedford-row, I called upon that gentleman, and learned that the person wanted *is* Daniel Dodd, my old neighbour, and that under the will of his brother George, who died some time ago in India, he is entitled to——"

"Hold hard, sir," said John, grasping the stranger by the arm, and staring at him with fixed eyes. "You're not having a lark, a cruel lark with us, are you?"

"God forbid," said the stranger, gravely.

"And answer me another thing, sir," John continued, in the same excited way. "You're not out of your mind, are you?"

"Certainly not," returned the man.

"Very well," said John; "you may go on."

"I was going to say," the stranger continued, "that under the will of his deceased brother

George, who died some time ago in India, Daniel Dodd is entitled to five thousand pounds."

"Martha!" cried John to his wife, who was up-stairs cleaning the rooms.

"Yes, John. What is it?"

"Father's money's come back again! Father's money's come back again! Father's money's come back again!" And he shouted it over and over again up the stairs, and slapped the banisters every time to give it emphasis.

"Are you gone mad, John?" was Martha's reply, when she was allowed to speak.

"You see, sir," said John to his visitor; "she thinks I must be mad; no wonder if I thought *you* were mad. But here's Daddy; he knows you, I dare say, and you can tell him; he often talked about his brother George who went to India; but I thought he had been dead long ago."

At that moment Daddy came in from one of his walks with Benjy, and was told of his fortune.

"Dear me," he said, sinking into his chair, "brother George is dead. Poor boy, poor boy!"

The poor boy had died at the good old age of threescore and ten, but Daddy still thought of him as the lad in the blue jacket from whom he had parted at Wapping when they were boys.

Not without many difficulties, long delay, and considerable cost, Daddy's claim to the five thousand pounds was established. John gave all his time—utterly neglecting the emporium—to the prosecution of the matter, and, oddly enough, in wooing Fortune in this most audacious and presumptuous manner, he proved successful; though, previously, when he had humbled himself in the dirt to implore her for a single smile, she had contemptuously passed onward, bespattering him with mud from her chariot-wheels. And one day John, knowing Daddy's weakness, brought home the five thousand pounds all in notes in the very canvas bag which had been the old man's bank in the days when he was well to do.

"There, father," said Martha, "putting the bag in his hand. And now what will you do with it?"

"What will I do with it?" said the old man. "I'll—I'll keep my promise to Benjy, and buy him that gun!"

"But there's more than will buy the gun, father."

"You don't mean that, Martha?" said the old man.

"Oh yes, father, a heap more."

"Then," said Daddy, "I'll give the rest to John to buy a horse and cart."

"But there's more even than that, father; ever so much more."

"Oh, well, you just keep that for yourself, Martha, for taking care of your old father."

And Daddy, with no elaborate design, but with the simple innocence of a child, which is sometimes wiser than the astute provisions of law, saved the dangerous formalities of will-making and the charges for legacy duty, by handing to his daughter Martha the bag containing all his money.

Before John even thought of his horse and cart—though that was lurking in a corner of his mind—he regained the tenancy of Daddy's old house, furnished it with as many of the old sticks as he could recover from the brokers' shops, with many splendid new ones besides for the drawing-room, and, when all was done, led Daddy back to his old quarters, and joined him there with Martha and all the family.

But dotage had been coming upon poor old Daddy, and he could scarcely be made to understand the change which had taken place in his position. He came at last to fancy that it was a dream, and sitting by the fireside of an evening, and recognising his old room peopled with the faces of John and Martha and their children, he would tell his daughter to wake him up by-and-by.

And so he went on dreaming, until one winter's night he woke up in a land where there was no more going to sleep.

And the days of John and Martha are likely to be long and prosperous, for they honoured their old father in his age and need, and the bread which they cast upon the waters has come back to them with a blessing.

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I.

TO BE TAKEN IMMEDIATELY.

I AM a Cheap Jack, and my own father's name was Willum Marigold. It was in his lifetime supposed by some that his name was William, but my own father always consistently said, No, it was Willum. On which point I content myself with looking at the argument this way:—If a man is not allowed to know his own name in a free country, how much is he allowed to know in a land of slavery? As to looking at the argument through the medium of the Register, Willum Marigold come into the world before Registers come up much—and went out of it too. They wouldn't have been greatly in his line neither, if they had chanced to come up before him.

I was born on the Queen's highway, but it was the King's at that time. A doctor was fetched to my own mother by my own father, when it took place on a common; and in consequence of his being a very kind gentleman, and accepting no fee but a tea-tray, I was named Doctor, out of gratitude and compliment to him. There you have me. Doctor Marigold.

I am at present a middle-aged man of a broadish build, in cords, leggings, and a sleeved waistcoat the strings of which is always gone behind. Repair them how you will, they go like fiddle-strings. You have been to the theatre, and you have seen one of the violin-players screw up his violin, after listening to it as if it had been whispering the secret to him that it feared it was out of order, and then you have heard it snap. That's as exactly similar to my waistcoat, as a waistcoat and a violin can be like one another.

I am partial to a white hat, and I like a shawl round my neck wore loose and easy. Sitting down is my favourite posture. If I have a taste in point of personal jewellery, it is mother-of-pearl buttons. There you have me again, as large as life.

The doctor having accepted a tea-tray, you'll guess that my father was a Cheap Jack before me. You are right. He was. It was a pretty tray. It represented a large lady going along a serpentining up-hill gravel-walk, to attend a little church. Two swans had likewise come astray with the same intentions. When I call her a large lady, I don't mean in point of breadth, for there she fell below my views, but she more than made it up in heighth; her heighth and slimness was—in short THE heighth of both.

I often saw that tray, after I was the innocently smiling cause (or more likely screeching one) of the doctor's standing it up on a table against the wall in his consulting-room. Whenever my own father and mother were in that part of the country, I used to put my head (I have heard my own mother say it was flaxen curls at that time, though you wouldn't know an old hearth-broom from it now, till you come to the handle and found it wasn't me) in at the doctor's door, and the doctor was always glad to see me, and said, "Aha, my brother practitioner! Come in, little M.D. How are your inclinations as to sixpence?"

You can't go on for ever, you'll find, nor yet could my father nor yet my mother. If you don't go off as a whole when you are about due, you're liable to go off in part and two to one your head's the part. Gradually my father went off his, and my mother went off hers. It was in a harmless way, but it put out the family where I boarded them. The old couple, though retired, got to be wholly and solely devoted to the Cheap Jack business, and were always selling the family off. Whenever the cloth was laid for dinner, my father began rattling the plates and dishes, as we do in our line when we put up crockery for a bid, only he had lost the trick of it, and mostly let 'em drop and broke 'em. As the old lady had been used to sit in the cart, and hand the articles out one by one to the old gentleman on the footboard to

sell, just in the same way she handed him every item of the family's property, and they disposed of it in their own imaginations from morning to night. At last the old gentleman, lying bedridden in the same room with the old lady, cries out in the old patter, fluent, after having been silent for two days and nights: "Now here, my jolly companions every one—which the Nightingale club in a village was held, At the sign of the Cabbage and Shears, Where the singers no doubt would have greatly excelled, But for want of taste voices and ears—now here, my jolly companions every one, is a working model of a used-up old Cheap Jack, without a tooth in his head, and with a pain in every bone: so like life that it would be just as good if it wasn't better, just as bad if it wasn't worse, and just as new if it wasn't worn out. Bid for the working model of the old Cheap Jack, who has drunk more gunpowder-tea with the ladies in his time than would blow the lid off a washerwoman's copper, and carry it as many thousands of miles higher than the moon as nought nix nought, divided by the national debt, carry nothing to the poor-rates, three under, and two over. Now my hearts of oak and men of straw, what do you say for the lot? Two shillings, a shilling, tenpence, eightpence, sixpence, fourpence. Twopence? Who said twopence? The gentleman in the scarecrow's hat? I am ashamed of the gentleman in the scarecrow's hat. I really am ashamed of him for his want of public spirit. Now I'll tell you what I'll do with you. Come! I'll throw you in a working model of a old woman that was married to the old Cheap Jack so long ago, that upon my word and honour it took place in Noah's Ark, before the Unicorn could get in to forbid the banns by blowing a tune upon his horn. There now! Come! What do you say for both? I'll tell you what I'll do with you. I don't bear you malice for being so backward. Here! If you make me a bid that'll only reflect a little credit on your town, I'll throw you in a warming-pan for nothing, and lend you a toasting-fork for life. Now come; what do you say after that splendid offer? Say two pound, say thirty shillings, say a pound, say ten shillings, say five, say two and six. You don't say even two and six? You say two and three? No. You shan't have the lot for two and three. I'd sooner give it you, if you was good looking enough. Here! Missis! Chuck the old man and woman into the cart, put the horse to, and drive 'em away and bury 'em!" Such were the last words of Willum Marigold, my own father, and they were carried out, by him and by his wife my own mother on one and the same day, as I ought to know, having followed as mourner.

My father had been a lovely one in his time at the Cheap Jack work, as his dying observations went to prove. But I top him. I don't say it because it's myself, but because it has been universally acknowledged by all that has had the means of comparison. I have worked at it. I have measured myself against other public speakers, Members of Parliament, Platforms, Pulpits, Counsel learned in the law—and where I have found 'em good, I have took a bit of imitation from 'em, and where I have found 'em bad, I have let 'em, alone. Now I'll tell you what. I mean to go down into my grave declaring that of all the callings ill used in Great Britain, the Cheap Jack calling is the worst used. Why ain't we a profession? Why ain't we endowed with privileges? Why are we forced to take out a hawkers' license, when no such thing is expected of the political hawkers? Where's the difference betwixt us? Except that we are Cheap Jacks and they are Dear Jacks, *I* don't see any difference but what's in our favour.

For look here! Say it's election-time. I am on the footboard of my cart in the market-place on a Saturday night. I put up a general miscellaneous lot. I say: "Now here my free and independent woters, I'm a going to give you such a chance as you never had in all your born days, nor yet the days preceding. Now I'll show you what I am a going to do with you. Here's a pair of razors that'll shave you closer than the Board of Guardians, here's a flat-iron worth its weight in gold, here's a frying-pan artificially flavoured with essence of beefsteaks to that degree that you've only got for the rest of your lives to fry bread and dripping in it and there you are replete with animal food, here's a genuine chronometer watch in such a solid silver case that you may knock at the door with it when you come home late from a social meeting and rouse your wife and family and save up your knocker for the postman, and here's half a dozen dinner plates that you may play the cymbals with to charm the baby when it's fractious. Stop! I'll throw you in another article and I'll give you that, and it's a rolling-pin, and if the baby can only get it well into its mouth when its teeth is coming and rub the gums once with it, they'll come through double, in a fit of laughter equal to being tickled. Stop again! I'll throw you in another article, because I don't like the looks of you, for you haven't the appearance of buyers unless I lose by you, and because I'd rather lose than not take money to-night, and that's a looking-glass in which you may see how ugly you look when you don't bid. What do you say now? Come! Do you say a pound? Not you, for you haven't got it. Do you say ten shillings? Not you, for you owe more to the tallyman. Well then, I'll tell you what I'll do with you. I'll heap 'em all on the footboard of the cart—there they are! razors, flat-iron, frying-pan, chronometer watch, dinner plates, rolling-pin, and looking-glass—take 'em all away for four shillings, and I'll give you sixpence for your trouble!" This is me, the Cheap Jack. But on the Monday morning, in the same market-place, comes the Dear Jack on the hustings—*his* cart—and what does *he* say? "Now my free and independent woters, I am a going to give you such a chance" (he begins just like me) "as you never had in all your born days, and that's

the chance of sending Myself to Parliament. Now I'll tell you what I am a going to do for you. Here's the interests of this magnificent town promoted above all the rest of the civilised and uncivilised earth. Here's your railways carried, and your neighbours' railways jockeyed. Here's all your sons in the Post-office. Here's Britannia smiling on you. Here's the eyes of Europe on you. Here's uniwersal prosperity for you, repletion of animal food, golden cornfields, gladsome homesteads, and rounds of applause from your own hearts, all in one lot and that's myself. Will you take me as I stand? You won't? Well then, I'll tell you what I'll do with you. Come now! I'll throw you in anything you ask for. There! Church-rates, abolition of church-rates, more malt tax, no malt tax, uniwersal education to the highest mark or uniwersal ignorance to the lowest, total abolition of flogging in the army or a dozen for every private once a month all round, Wrongs of Men or Rights of Women,—only say which it shall be, take 'em or leave 'em, and I'm of your opinion altogether, and the lot's your own on your own terms. There! You won't take it yet? Well then, I'll tell you what I'll do with you. Come! You *are* such free and independent woters, and I *am* so proud of you—you *are* such a noble and enlightened constituency, and I *am* so ambitious of the honour and dignity of being your member, which is by far the highest level to which the wings of the human mind can soar—that I'll tell you what I'll do with you. I'll throw you in all the public-houses in your magnificent town for nothing. Will that content you? It won't? You won't take the lot yet? Well then, before I put the horse in and drive away, and make the offer to the next most magnificent town that can be discovered, I'll tell you what I'll do. Take the lot, and I'll drop two thousand pound in the streets of your magnificent town for them to pick up that can. Not enough? Now look here. This is the very furthest that I'm a going to. I'll make it two thousand five hundred. And still you won't? Here, missis! Put the horse—no, stop half a moment, I shouldn't like to turn my back upon you neither for a trifle, I'll make it two thousand seven hundred and fifty pound. There! Take the lot on your own terms, and I'll count out two thousand seven hundred and fifty pound on the footboard of the cart, to be dropped in the streets of your magnificent town for them to pick up that can. What do you say? Come now! You won't do better, and you may do worse. You take it? Hooray! Sold again, and got the seat!"

These Dear Jacks soap the people shameful, but we Cheap Jacks don't. We tell 'em the truth about themselves to their faces, and scorn to court 'em. As to wenturesomeness in the way of puffing up the lots, the Dear Jacks beat us hollow. It is considered in the Cheap Jack calling that better patter can be made out of a gun than any article we put up from the cart, except a pair of spectacles. I often hold forth about a gun for a quarter of an hour, and feel as if I need never leave off. But when I tell 'em what the gun can do, and what the gun has brought down, I never go half so far as the Dear Jacks do when they make speeches in praise of *their* guns—their great guns that set 'em on to do it. Besides, I'm in business for myself, I ain't sent down into the market-place to order, as they are. Besides again, my guns don't know what I say in their laudation, and their guns do, and the whole concern of 'em have reason to be sick and ashamed all round. These are some of my arguments for declaring that the Cheap Jack calling is treated ill in Great Britain, and for turning warm when I think of the other Jacks in question setting themselves up to pretend to look down upon it.

I courted my wife from the footboard of the cart. I did indeed. She was a Suffolk young woman, and it was in Ipswich market-place right opposite the corn-chandler's shop. I had noticed her up at a window last Saturday that was, appreciating highly. I had took to her, and I had said to myself, "If not already disposed of, I'll have that lot." Next Saturday that come, I pitched the cart on the same pitch, and I was in very high feather indeed, keeping 'em laughing the whole of the time and getting off the goods briskly. At last I took out of my waistcoat-pocket, a small lot wrapped in soft paper, and I put it this way (looking up at the window where she was). "Now here my blooming English maidens is an article, the last article of the present evening's sale, which I offer to only you the lovely Suffolk Dumplings biling over with beauty, and I won't take a bid of a thousand pound for, from any man alive. Now what is it? Why, I'll tell you what it is. It's made of fine gold, and it's not broke though there's a hole in the middle of it, and it's stronger than any fetter that ever was forged, though it's smaller than any finger in my set of ten. Why ten? Because when my parents made over my property to me, I tell you true, there was twelve sheets, twelve towels, twelve tablecloths, twelve knives, twelve forks, twelve tablespoons, and twelve teaspoons, but my set of fingers was two short of a dozen and could never since be matched. Now what else is it? Come I'll tell you. It's a hoop of solid gold, wrapped in a silver curl-paper that I myself took off the shining locks of the ever beautiful old lady in Threadneedle-street, London city. I wouldn't tell you so if I hadn't the paper to show, or you mightn't believe it even of me. Now what else is it? It's a man-trap and a handcuff, the parish stocks and a leg-lock, all in gold and all in one. Now what else is it? It's a wedding ring. Now I'll tell you what I'm a-going to do with it. I'm not a-going to offer this lot for money, but I mean to give it to the next of you beauties that laughs, and I'll pay her a visit to-morrow morning at exactly half after nine o'clock as the chimes go, and I'll take her out for a walk to put up the banns." *She* laughed, and got the ring handed up to her. When I called in the morning, she says, "Oh

dear! It's never you and you never mean it?" "It's ever me," says I, "and I am ever yours, and I ever mean it." So we got married, after being put up three times—which, by-the-by, is quite in the Cheap Jack way again, and shows once more how the Cheap Jack customs pervade society.

She wasn't a bad wife, but she had a temper. If she could have parted with that one article at a sacrifice, I wouldn't have swopped her away in exchange for any other woman in England. Not that I ever did swop her away, for we lived together till she died, and that was thirteen year. Now my lords and ladies and gentlefolks all, I'll let you into a secret, though you won't believe it. Thirteen year of temper in a Palace would try the worst of you, but thirteen year of temper in a Cart would try the best of you. You are kept so very close to it in a cart, you see. There's thousands of couples among you, getting on like sweet ile upon a whetstone in houses five and six pairs of stairs high, that would go to the Divorce Court in a cart. Whether the jolting makes it worse, I don't undertake to decide, but in a cart it does come home to you and stick to you. Wiolence in a cart is *so* wiolent, and aggrawation in a cart is *so* aggrawating.

We might have had such a pleasant life! A roomy cart, with the large goods hung outside and the bed slung underneath it when on the road, an iron pot and a kettle, a fireplace for the cold weather, a chimney for the smoke, a hanging shelf and a cupboard, a dog, and a horse. What more do you want? You draw off upon a bit of turf in a green lane or by the roadside, you hobble your old horse and turn him grazing, you light your fire upon the ashes of the last visitors, you cook your stew, and you wouldn't call the Emperor of France your father. But have a temper in the cart, flinging language and the hardest goods in stock at you, and where are you then? Put a name to your feelings.

My dog knew as well when she was on the turn as I did. Before she broke out, he would give a howl, and bolt. How he knew it, was a mystery to me, but the sure and certain knowledge of it would wake him up out of his soundest sleep, and he would give a howl, and bolt. At such times I wished I was him.

The worst of it was, we had a daughter born to us, and I love children with all my heart. When she was in her furies, she beat the child. This got to be so shocking as the child got to be four or five year old, that I have many a time gone on with my whip over my shoulder, at the old horse's head, sobbing and crying worse than ever little Sophy did. For how could I prevent it? Such a thing is not to be tried with such a temper—in a cart—without coming to a fight. It's in the natural size and formation of a cart to bring it to a fight. And then the poor child got worse terrified than before, as well as worse hurt generally, and her mother made complaints to the next people we lighted on, and the word went round, "Here's a wretch of a Cheap Jack been a beating his wife."

Little Sophy was such a brave child! She grew to be quite devoted to her poor father, though he could do so little to help her. She had a wonderful quantity of shining dark hair, all curling natural about her. It is quite astonishing to me now, that I didn't go tearing mad when I used to see her run from her mother before the cart, and her mother catch her by this hair, and pull her down by it, and beat her.

Such a brave child I said she was. Ah! with reason.

"Don't you mind next time, father dear," she would whisper to me, with her little face still flushed, and her bright eyes still wet; "if I don't cry out, you may know I am not much hurt. And even if I do cry out, it will only be to get mother to let go and leave off." What I have seen the little spirit bear—for me—without crying out!

Yet in other respects her mother took great care of her. Her clothes were always clean and neat, and her mother was never tired of working at 'em. Such is the inconsistency in things. Our being down in the marsh country in unhealthy weather, I consider the cause of Sophy's taking bad low fever; but however she took it, once she got it she turned away from her mother for evermore, and nothing would persuade her to be touched by her mother's hand. She would shiver and say "No, no, no," when it was offered at, and would hide her face on my shoulder, and hold me tighter round the neck.

The Cheap Jack business had been worse than ever I had known it, what with one thing and what with another (and not least what with railroads, which will cut it all to pieces, I expect at last), and I was run dry of money. For which reason, one night at that period of little Sophy's being so bad, either we must have come to a dead-lock for victuals and drink, or I must have pitched the cart as I did.

I couldn't get the dear child to lie down or leave go of me, and indeed I hadn't the heart to try, so I stepped out on the footboard with her holding round my neck. They all set up a laugh when they see us, and one chuckle-headed Joskin (that I hated for it) made the bidding, "tuppence for her!"

"Now, you country boobies," says I, feeling as if my heart was a heavy weight at the end of a broken sash-line, "I give you notice that I am a going to charm the money out of your pockets, and to give you so much more than your money's worth that you'll only persuade yourselves to draw your Saturday night's wages ever again arterwards, by the hopes of meeting me to lay 'em out with, which you never will, and why not? Because I've made my fortune by selling my goods on a large scale for seventy-five per cent less than I give for 'em, and I am consequently to be elevated to the House of Peers next week, by the title of the Duke of Cheap and Markis Jackaloorul. Now let's know what you want to-night, and you shall have it. But first of all, shall I tell you why I have got this little girl round my neck? You don't want to know? Then you shall. She belongs to the Fairies.

She's a fortune-teller. She can tell me all about you in a whisper, and can put me up to whether you're a-going to buy a lot or leave it. Now do you want a saw? No, she says you don't, because you're too clumsy to use one. Else here's a saw which would be a lifelong blessing to a handy man, at four shillings, at three and six, at three, at two and six, at two, at eighteenpence. But none of you shall have it at any price, on account of your well-known awkwardness which would make it manslaughter. The same objection applies to this set of three planes which I won't let you have neither, so don't bid for 'em. Now I am a-going to ask her what you do want. (Then I whispered, "Your head burns so, that I am afraid it hurts you bad, my pet," and she answered, without opening her heavy eyes, "Just a little, father.") Oh! This little fortune-teller says it's a memorandum-book you want. Then why didn't you mention it? Here it is. Look at it. Two hundred superfine hot-pressed wire-wove pages—if you don't believe me, count 'em—ready ruled for your expenses, an everlastingly-pointed pencil to put 'em down with, a double-bladed penknife to scratch 'em out with, a book of printed tables to calculate your income with, and a camp-stool to sit down upon while you give your mind to it! Stop! And an umbrella to keep the moon off when you give your mind to it on a pitch dark night. Now I won't ask you how much for the lot, but how little? How little are you thinking of? Don't be ashamed to mention it, because my fortune-teller knows already. (Then making believe to whisper, I kissed her, and she kissed me.) Why, she says you're thinking of as little as three and threepence! I couldn't have believed it, even of you, unless she told me. Three and threepence! And a set of printed tables in the lot that'll calculate your income up to forty thousand a year! With an income of forty thousand a year, you grudge three and sixpence. Well then, I'll tell you my opinion. I so despise the threepence, that I'd sooner take three shillings. There. For three shillings, three shillings, three shillings! Gone. Hand 'em over to the lucky man."

As there had been no bid at all, everybody looked about and grinned at everybody, while I touched little Sophy's face and asked her if she felt faint or giddy. "Not very, father. It will soon be over." Then turning from the pretty patient eyes, which were opened now, and seeing nothing but grins across my lighted grease-pot, I went on again in my Cheap Jack style. "Where's the butcher?" (My sorrowful eye had just caught sight of a fat young butcher on the outside of the crowd.) She says the good luck is the butcher's. "Where is he?" Everybody handed on the blushing butcher to the front, and there was a roar, and the butcher felt himself obliged to put his hand in his pocket and take the lot. The party so picked out, in general does feel obliged to take the lot—good four times out of six. Then we had another lot the counterpart of that one, and sold it sixpence cheaper, which is always wery much enjoyed. Then we had the spectacles. It ain't a special profitable lot, but I put 'em on, and I see what the Chancellor of the Exchequer is going to take off the taxes, and I see what the sweetheart of the young woman in the shawl is doing at home, and I see what the Bishops has got for dinner, and a deal more that seldom fails to fetch 'em up in their spirits; and the better their spirits, the better their bids. Then we had the ladies' lot—the teapot, tea-caddy, glass sugar basin, half a dozen spoons, and caudle-cup—and all the time I was making similar excuses to give a look or two and say a word or two to my poor child. It was while the second ladies' lot was holding 'em enchained that I felt her lift herself a little on my shoulder, to look across the dark street. "What troubles you, darling?" "Nothing troubles me, father. I am not at all troubled. But don't I see a pretty churchyard over there?" "Yes, my dear." "Kiss me twice, dear father, and lay me down to rest upon that churchyard grass so soft and green." I staggered back into the cart with her head dropped on my shoulder, and I says to her mother, "Quick. Shut the door! Don't let those laughing people see!" "What's the matter?" she cries. "O, woman, woman," I tells her, "you'll never catch my little Sophy by her hair again, for she has flown away from you!"

Maybe those were harder words than I meant 'em, but from that time forth my wife took to brooding, and would sit in the cart or walk beside it, hours at a stretch, with her arms crossed and her eyes looking on the ground. When her furies took her (which was rather seldomer than before) they took her in a new way, and she banged herself about to that extent that I was forced to hold her. She got none the better for a little drink now and then, and through some years I used to wonder as I plodded along at the old horse's head whether there was many carts upon the road that held so much dreariness as mine, for all my being looked up to as the King of the Cheap Jacks. So sad our lives went on till one summer evening, when as we were coming into Exeter out of the further West of England, we saw a woman beating a child in a cruel manner, who screamed, "Don't beat me! O mother, mother, mother!" Then my wife stopped her ears and ran away like a wild thing, and next day she was found in the river.

Me and my dog were all the company left in the cart now, and the dog learned to give a short bark when they wouldn't bid, and to give another and a nod of his head when I asked him: "Who said half-a-crown? Are you the gentleman, sir, that offered half-a-crown?" He attained to an immense heighth of popularity, and I shall always believe taught himself entirely out of his own head to growl at any person in the crowd that bid as low as sixpence. But he got to be well on in years, and one night when I was conwulsing York with the spectacles, he took a conwulsion on his own account upon the very footboard by me, and it finished him.

Being naturally of a tender turn, I had dreadful lonely feelings on me arter this. I conquered 'em at selling times, having a reputation to keep (not to mention keeping myself), but they got me down in private and rolled upon me. That's often the way with us public characters. See us on the footboard, and you'd give pretty well anything you possess to be us. See us off the footboard, and you'd add a trifle to be off your bargain. It was under those circumstances that I come acquainted with a giant. I might have been too high to fall into conversation with him, had it not been for my lonely feelings. For the general rule is, going round the country, to draw the line at dressing up. When a man can't trust his getting a living to his undisguised abilities, you consider him below your sort. And this giant when on view figured as a Roman.

He was a languid young man, which I attribute to the distance betwixt his extremities. He had a little head and less in it, he had weak eyes and weak knees, and altogether you couldn't look at him without feeling that there was greatly too much of him both for his joints and his mind. But he was an amiable though timid young man (his mother let him out, and spent the money), and we come acquainted when he was walking to ease the horse betwixt two fairs. He was called Rinaldo di Velasco, his name being Pickleson.

This giant otherwise Pickleson mentioned to me under the seal of confidence, that beyond his being a burden to himself, his life was made a burden to him, by the cruelty of his master towards a step-daughter who was deaf and dumb. Her mother was dead, and she had no living soul to take her part, and was used most hard. She travelled with his master's caravan only because there was nowhere to leave her, and this giant otherwise Pickleson did go so far as to believe that his master often tried to lose her He was such a very languid young man, that I don't know how long it didn't take him to get this story out, but it passed through his defective circulation to his top extremity in course of time.

When I heard this account from the giant otherwise Pickleson, and likewise that the poor girl had beautiful long dark hair, and was often pulled down by it and beaten, I couldn't see the giant through what stood in my eyes. Having wiped 'em, I give him sixpence (for he was kept as short as he was long), and he laid it out in two threepennorths of gin-and-water, which so brisked him up, that he sang the Favourite Comic of Shivery Shakey, ain't it cold. A popular effect which his master had tried every other means to get out of him as a Roman, wholly in vain.

His master's name was Mim, a wery hoarse man and I knew him to speak to. I went to that Fair as a mere civilian, leaving the cart outside the town, and I looked about the back of the Vans while the performing was going on, and at last sitting dozing against a muddy cart-wheel, I come upon the poor girl who was deaf and dumb. At the first look I might almost have judged that she had escaped from the Wild Beast Show, but at the second I thought better of her, and thought that if she was more cared for and more kindly used she would be like my child. She was just the same age that my own daughter would have been, if her pretty head had not fell down upon my shoulder that unfortunate night.

To cut it short, I spoke confidential to Mim while he was beating the gong outside betwixt two lots of Pickleson's publics, and I put it to him, "She lies heavy on your own hands; what'll you take for her?" Mim was a most ferocious swearer. Suppressing that part of his reply, which was much the longest part, his reply was, "A pair of braces." "Now I'll tell you," says I, "what I'm a going to do with you. I'm a going to fetch you half a dozen pair of the primest braces in the cart, and then to take her away with me." Says Mim (again ferocious), "I'll believe it when I've got the goods, and no sooner." I made all the haste I could, lest he should think twice of it, and the bargain was completed, which Pickleson he was thereby so relieved in his mind that he come out at his little back door, longways like a serpent, and give us Shivery Shakey in a whisper among the wheels at parting.

It was happy days for both of us when Sophy and me began to travel in the cart. I at once give her the name of Sophy, to put her ever towards me in the attitude of my own daughter. We soon made out to begin to understand one another through the goodness of the Heavens, when she knowed that I meant true and kind by her. In a very little time she was wonderful fond of me. You have no idea what it is to have any body wonderful fond of you, unless you have been got down and rolled upon by the lonely feelings that I have mentioned as having once got the better of me.

You'd have laughed—or the rewerse—it's according to your disposition—if you could have seen me trying to teach Sophy. At first I was helped — you'd never guess by what — milestones. I got some large alphabets in a box, all the letters separate on bits of bone, and say we was going to WINDSOR, I give her those letters in that order, and then at every milestone I showed her those same letters in that same order again, and pointed towards the abode of royalty. Another time I give her C A R T, and then chalked the same upon the cart. Another time I give her D O C T O R M A R I G O L D, and hung a corresponding inscription outside my waistcoat. People that met us might stare a bit and laugh, but what did *I* care if she caught the idea? She caught it after long patience and trouble, and then we did begin to get on swimmingly, I believe you! At first she was a little given to consider me the cart, and the cart the abode of royalty, but that soon wore off.

We had our signs, too, and they was hundreds in number. Sometimes, she would sit looking at me and considering hard how to communicate

with me about something fresh—how to ask me what she wanted explained—and then she was (or I thought she was; what does it signify?) so like my child with those years added to her, that I half believed it was herself, trying to tell me where she had been to up in the skies, and what she had seen since that unhappy night when she flied away. She had a pretty face, and now that there was no one to drag at her bright dark hair and it was all in order, there was a something touching in her looks that made the cart most peaceful and most quiet, though not at all melancolly. [N.B. In the Cheap Jack patter, we generally sound it, lemonjolly, and it gets a laugh.]

The way she learnt to understand any look of mine was truly surprising. When I sold of a night, she would sit in the cart unseen by them outside, and would give a eager look into my eyes when I looked in, and would hand me straight the precise article or articles I wanted. And then she would clap her hands and laugh for joy. And as for me, seeing her so bright, and remembering what she was when I first lighted on her, starved and beaten and ragged, leaning asleep against the muddy cart-wheel, it give me such heart that I gained a greater heighth of reputation than ever, and I put Pickleson down (by the name of Mim's Travelling Giant otherwise Pickleson) for a fypunnote in my will.

This happiness went on in the cart till she was sixteen year old. By which time I began to feel not satisfied that I had done my whole duty by her, and to consider that she ought to have better teaching than I could give her. It drew a many tears on both sides when I commenced explaining my views to her, but what's right is right and you can't neither by tears nor laughter do away with its character.

So I took her hand in mine, and I went with her one day to the Deaf and Dumb Establishment in London, and when the gentleman come to speak to us, I says to him: "Now I'll tell you what I'll do with you sir. I am nothing but a Cheap Jack, but of late years I have laid by for a rainy day notwithstanding. This is my only daughter (adopted) and you can't produce a deafer nor a dumber. Teach her the most that can be taught her, in the shortest separation that can be named—state the figure for it—and I am game to put the money down. I won't bate you a single farthing sir but I'll put down the money here and now, and I'll thankfully throw you in a pound to take it. There!" The gentleman smiled, and then, "Well, well," says he, "I must first know what she has learnt already. How do you communicate with her?" Then I showed him, and she wrote in printed writing many names of things and so forth, and we held some sprightly conversation, Sophy and me, about a little story in a book which the gentleman showed her and which she was able to read. "This is most extraordinary," says the gentleman; "is it possible that you have been her only teacher?" "I have been her only teacher, sir," I says, "besides herself." "Then," says the gentleman, and more acceptable words was never spoke to me, "you're a clever fellow, and a good fellow." This he makes known to Sophy, who kisses his hands, claps her own, and laughs and cries upon it.

We saw the gentleman four times in all, and when he took down my name and asked how in the world it ever chanced to be Doctor, it come out that he was own nephew by the sister's side, if you'll believe me, to the very Doctor that I was called after. This made our footing still easier, and he says to me:

"Now Marigold, tell me what more do you want your adopted daughter to know?"

"I want her sir to be cut off from the world as little as can be, considering her deprivations, and therefore to be able to read whatever is wrote, with perfect ease and pleasure."

"My good fellow," urges the gentleman, opening his eyes wide, "why *I* can't do that myself!"

I took his joke and give him a laugh (knowing by experience how flat you fall without it) and I mended my words accordingly.

"What do you mean to do with her afterwards?" asks the gentleman, with a sort of a doubtful eye. "To take her about the country?"

"In the cart sir, but only in the cart. She will live a private life, you understand, in the cart. I should never think of bringing her infirmities before the public. I wouldn't make a show of her, for any money."

The gentleman nodded and seemed to approve.

"Well," says he, "can you part with her for two years?"

"To do her that good—yes, sir."

"There's another question," says the gentleman, looking towards her: "Can she part with you for two years?"

I don't know that it was a harder matter of itself (for the other was hard enough to me), but it was harder to get over. However, she was pacified to it at last, and the separation betwixt us was settled. How it cut up both of us when it took place, and when I left her at the door in the dark of an evening, I don't tell. But I know this:—remembering that night, I shall never pass that same establishment without a heart-ache and a swelling in the throat, and I couldn't put you up the best of lots in sight of it with my usual spirit—no, not even the gun, nor the pair of spectacles—for five hundred pound reward from the Secretary of State for the Home Department, and throw in the honour of putting my legs under his mahogany arterwards.

Still, the loneliness that followed in the cart was not the old loneliness, because there was a term put to it however long to look forward to, and because I could think, when I was anyways down, that she belonged to me and I belonged to her. Always planning for her coming back, I bought in a few months' time another cart, and what do you think I planned to do with it? I'll tell you. I planned to fit it up with shelves, and books for her reading, and to have a seat in it where I could sit and see her read, and think that I had been her first teacher.

Not hurrying over the job, I had the fittings knocked together in contriving ways under my own inspection, and here was her bed in a berth with curtains, and there was her reading-table, and here was her writing-desk, and elsewhere was her books in rows upon rows, picters and no picters, bindings and no bindings, gilt-edged and plain, just as I could pick 'em up for her in lots up and down the country, North and South and West and East, Winds liked best and winds liked least, Here and there and gone astray, Over the hills and far away. And when I had got together pretty well as many books as the cart would neatly hold, a new scheme come into my head which, as it turned out, kept my time and attention a good deal employed and helped me over the two years stile.

Without being of an awaricious temper, I like to be the owner of things. I should'nt wish, for instance, to go partners with yourself in the Cheap Jack cart. It's not that I mistrust you, but that I'd rather know it was mine. Similarly, very likely you'd rather know it was yours. Well! A kind of a jealousy began to creep into my mind when I reflected that all those books would have been read by other people long before they was read by her. It seemed to take away from her being the owner of 'em like. In this way, the question got into my head:—Couldn't I have a book new-made express for her, which she should be the first to read?

It pleased me, that thought did, and as I never was a man to let a thought sleep (you must wake up all the whole family of thoughts you've got and burn their nightcaps, or you won't do in the cheap Jack line), I set to work at it. Considering that I was in the habit of changing so much about the country, and that I should have to find out a literary character here to make a deal with, and another literary character there to make a deal with, as opportunities presented, I hit on the plan that this same book should be a general miscellaneous lot—like the razors, flat-iron, chronometer watch, dinner plates, rolling-pin, and looking-glass—and shouldn't be offered as a single individual article like the spectacles or the gun. When I had come to that conclusion, I come to another, which shall likewise be yours.

Often had I regretted that she never had heard me on the footboard, and that she never could hear me. It ain't that *I* am vain, but that *you* don't like to put your own light under a bushel. What's the worth of your reputation, if you can't convey the reason for it to the person you most wish to value it? Now I'll put it to you. Is it worth sixpence, fippence, fourpence, threepence, twopence, a penny, a halfpenny, a farthing? No, it ain't. Not worth a farthing. Very well then. My conclusion was, that I would begin her book with some account of myself. So that, through reading a specimen or two of me on the footboard, she might form an idea of my merits there. I was aware that I couldn't do myself justice. A man can't write his eye (at least *I* don't know how to), nor yet can a man write his voice, nor the rate of his talk, nor the quickness of his action, nor his general spicy way. But he can write his turns of speech, when he is a public speaker — and indeed I have heard that he very often does, before he speaks 'em.

Well! Having formed that resolution, then come the question of a name. How did I hammer that hot iron into shape? This way. The most difficult explanation I had ever had with her was, how I come to be called Doctor, and yet was no Doctor. After all, I felt that I had failed of getting it correctly into her mind, with my utmost pains. But trusting to her improvement in the two years, I thought that I might trust to her understanding it when she should come to read it as put down by my own hand. Then I thought I would try a joke with her and watch how it took, by which of itself I might fully judge of her understanding it. We had first discovered the mistake we had dropped into, through her having asked me to prescribe for her when she had supposed me to be a Doctor in a medical point of view, so thinks I, "Now, if I give this book the name of my Prescriptions, and if she catches the idea that my only Prescriptions are for her amusement and interest—to make her laugh in a pleasant way, or to make her cry in a pleasant way—it will be a delightful proof to both of us that we have got over our difficulty. It fell out to absolute perfection. For when she saw the book, as I had it got up—the printed and pressed book—lying on her desk in her cart, and saw the title, DOCTOR MARIGOLD'S PRESCRIPTIONS, she looked at me for a moment with astonishment, then fluttered the leaves, then broke out a laughing in the charmingest way, then felt her pulse and shook her head, then turned the pages pretending to read them most attentive, then kissed the book to me, and put it to her bosom with both her hands. I never was better pleased in all my life!

But let me not anticipate. (I take that expression out of a lot of romances I bought for her. I never opened a single one of 'em—and I have opened many—but I found the romancer saying "let me not anticipate." Which being so, I wonder why he did anticipate, or who asked him to it.) Let me not, I say, anticipate. This same book took up all my spare time. It was no play to get the other articles together in the general miscellaneous lot, but when it come to my own article! There! I couldn't have believed the blotting, nor yet the buckling to at it, nor the patience over it. Which again is like the footboard. The public have no idea.

At last it was done, and the two years' time was gone after all the other time before it, and where it's all gone to, Who knows? The new cart was finished—yellow outside, relieved with wermillion and brass fittings—the old horse was put in it, a new 'un and a boy being laid on for the Cheap Jack cart—and I cleaned myself up to

go and fetch her. Bright cold weather it was, cart-chimneys smoking, carts pitched private on a piece of waste ground over at Wandsworth where you may see 'em from the Sou' Western Railway when not upon the road. (Look out of the right-hand window going down.)

"Marigold," says the gentleman, giving his hand hearty, "I am very glad to see you."

"Yet I have my doubts, sir," says I, "if you can be half as glad to see me, as I am to see you."

"The time has appeared so long; has it, Marigold?"

"I won't say that, sir, considering its real length; but——"

"What a start, my good fellow!"

Ah! I should think it was! Grown such a woman, so pretty, so intelligent, so expressive! I knew then that she must be really like my child, or I could never have known her, standing quiet by the door.

"You are affected," says the gentleman in a kindly manner.

"I feel, sir," says I, "that I am but a rough chap in a sleeved waistcoat."

"*I* feel," says the gentleman, "that it was you who raised her from misery and degradation, and brought her into communication with her kind. But why do we converse alone together, when we can converse so well with her? Address her in your own way."

"I am such a rough chap in a sleeved waistcoat, sir," says I, "and she is such a graceful woman, and she stands so quiet at the door!"

"Try if she moves at the old sign," says the gentleman.

They had got it up together o' purpose to please me! For when I give her the old sign, she rushed to my feet, and dropped upon her knees, holding up her hands to me with pouring tears of love and joy; and when I took her hands and lifted her, she clasped me round the neck and lay there; and I don't know what a fool I didn't make of myself, until we all three settled down into talking without sound, as if there was a something soft and pleasant spread over the whole world for us.

Now I'll tell you what I am a going to do with you. I am a going to offer you the general miscellaneous lot, her own book, never read by anybody else but me, added to and completed by me after her first reading of it, eight-and-forty printed pages, six-and-ninety columns, Whiting's own work, Beaufort House to wit, thrown off by the steam-ingine, best of paper, beautiful green wrapper, folded like clean linen come home from the clear-starcher's, and so exquisitely stitched that, regarded as a piece of needlework alone it's better than the sampler of a seamstress undergoing a Competitive Examination for Starvation before the Civil Service Commissioners—and I offer the lot for what? For eight pound? Not so much. For six pound? Less. For four pound? Why, I hardly expect you to believe me, but that's the sum. Four pound! The stitching alone cost half as much again. Here's forty-eight original pages, ninety-six original columns, for four pound. You want more for the money? Take it. Three whole pages of advertisements of thrilling interest thrown in for nothing. Read 'em and believe 'em. More? My best of wishes for your merry Christmases and your happy New Years, your long lives and your true prosperities. Worth twenty pound good if they are delivered as I send them. Remember! Here's a final prescription added, "To be taken for life," which will tell you how the cart broke down, and where the journey ended. You think Four Pound too much? And still you think so? Come! I'll tell you what then. Say Four Pence, and keep the secret.

II.

NOT TO BE TAKEN AT BED-TIME.

This is the legend of a house called the Devil's Inn, standing in the heather on the top of the Connemara mountains, in a shallow valley hollowed between five peaks. Tourists sometimes come in sight of it on September evenings; a crazy and weather-stained apparition, with the sun glaring at it angrily between the hills, and striking its shattered window-panes. Guides are known to shun it, however.

The house was built by a stranger, who came no one knew whence, and whom the people nicknamed Coll Dhu (Black Coll), because of his sullen bearing and solitary habits. His dwelling they called the Devil's Inn, because no tired traveller had ever been asked to rest under its roof, nor friend known to cross its threshold. No one bore him company in his retreat but a wizen-faced old man, who shunned the good-morrow of the trudging peasant when he made occasional excursions to the nearest village for provisions for himself and master, and who was as secret as a stone concerning all the antecedents of both.

For the first year of their residence in the country, there had been much speculation as to who they were, and what they did with themselves up there among the clouds and eagles. Some said that Coll Dhu was a scion of the old family from whose hands the surrounding lands had passed; and that, embittered by poverty and pride, he had come to bury himself in solitude, and brood over his misfortunes. Others hinted of crime, and flight from another country; others again whispered of those who were cursed from their birth, and could never smile, nor yet make friends with a fellow-creature till the day of their death. But when two years had passed, the wonder had somewhat died out, and Coll Dhu was little thought of, except when a herd looking for sheep crossed the track of a big dark man walking the mountains gun in

hand, to whom he did not dare say "Lord save you!" or when a housewife rocking her cradle of a winter's night, crossed herself as a gust of storm thundered over her cabin-roof, with the exclamation, "Oh, then, it's Coll Dhu that has enough o' the fresh air about his head up there this night, the crature!"

Coll Dhu had lived thus in his solitude for some years, when it became known that Colonel Blake, the new lord of the soil, was coming to visit the country. By climbing one of the peaks encircling his eyrie, Coll could look sheer down a mountain-side, and see in miniature beneath him, a grey old dwelling with ivied chimneys and weather-slated walls, standing amongst straggling trees and grim warlike rocks, that gave it the look of a fortress, gazing out to the Atlantic for ever with the eager eyes of all its windows, as if demanding perpetually, "What tidings from the New World?"

He could see now masons and carpenters crawling about below, like ants in the sun, overrunning the old house from base to chimney, daubing here and knocking there, tumbling down walls that looked to Coll, up among the clouds, like a handful of jackstones, and building up others that looked like the toy fences in a child's Farm. Throughout several months he must have watched the busy ants at their task of breaking and mending again, disfiguring and beautifying; but when all was done he had not the curiosity to stride down and admire the handsome paneling of the new billiard-room, nor yet the fine view which the enlarged bay-window in the drawing-room commanded of the watery highway to Newfoundland.

Deep summer was melting into autumn, and the amber streaks of decay were beginning to creep out and trail over the ripe purple of moor and mountain, when Colonel Blake, his only daughter, and a party of friends, arrived in the country. The grey house below was alive with gaiety, but Coll Dhu no longer found an interest in observing it from his eyrie. When he watched the sun rise or set, he chose to ascend some crag that looked on no human habitation. When he sallied forth on his excursions, gun in hand, he set his face towards the most isolated wastes, dipping into the loneliest valleys, and scaling the nakedest ridges. When he came by chance within call of other excursionists, gun in hand he plunged into the shade of some hollow, and avoided an encounter. Yet it was fated, for all that, that he and Colonel Blake should meet.

Towards the evening of one bright September day, the wind changed, and in half an hour the mountains were wrapped in a thick blinding mist. Coll Dhu was far from his den, but so well had he searched these mountains, and inured himself to their climate, that neither storm, rain, nor fog, had power to disturb him. But while he stalked on his way, a faint and agonised cry from a human voice reached him through the smothering mist. He quickly tracked the sound, and gained the side of a man who was stumbling along in danger of death at every step.

"Follow me!" said Coll Dhu to this man, and, in an hour's time, brought him safely to the lowlands, and up to the walls of the eager-eyed mansion.

"I am Colonel Blake," said the frank soldier, when, having left the fog behind him, they stood in the starlight under the lighted windows. "Pray tell me quickly to whom I owe my life."

As he spoke, he glanced up at his benefactor, a large man with a sombre sun-burned face.

"Colonel Blake," said Coll Dhu, after a strange pause, "your father suggested to my father to stake his estates at the gaming table. They were staked, and the tempter won. Both are dead; but you and I live, and I have sworn to injure you."

The colonel laughed good humouredly at the uneasy face above him.

"And you began to keep your oath to-night by saving my life?" said he. "Come! I am a soldier, and know how to meet an enemy; but I had far rather meet a friend. I shall not be happy till you have eaten my salt. We have merry-making to-night in honour of my daughter's birthday. Come in and join us?"

Coll Dhu looked at the earth doggedly.

"I have told you," he said, "who and what I am, and I will not cross your threshold."

But at this moment (so runs my story) a French window opened among the flower-beds by which they were standing, and a vision appeared which stayed the words on Coll's tongue. A stately girl, clad in white satin, stood framed in the ivied window, with the warm light from within streaming around her richly-moulded figure into the night. Her face was as pale as her gown, her eyes were swimming in tears, but a firm smile sat on her lips as she held out both hands to her father. The light behind her, touched the glistening folds of her dress—the lustrous pearls round her throat—the coronet of blood-red roses which encircled the knotted braids at the back of her head. Satin, pearls, and roses—had Coll Dhu, of the Devil's Inn, never set eyes upon such things before?

Evleen Blake was no nervous tearful miss. A few quick words—"Thank God! you're safe; the rest have been home an hour"—and a tight pressure of her father's fingers between her own jewelled hands, were all that betrayed the uneasiness she had suffered.

"Faith, my love, I owe my life to this brave gentleman!" said the blithe colonel. "Press him to come in and be our guest, Evleen. He wants to retreat to his mountains, and lose himself again in the fog where I found him; or, rather, where he found me! Come, sir" (to Coll), "you must surrender to this fair besieger."

An introduction followed. "Coll Dhu!" murmured Evleen Blake, for she had heard the common tales of him; but with a frank welcome she invited her father's preserver to taste the hospitality of that father's house.

"I beg you to come in, sir," she said; "but

for you our gaiety must have been turned into mourning. A shadow will be upon our mirth if our benefactor disdains to join in it."

With a sweet grace, mingled with a certain hauteur from which she was never free, she extended her white hand to the tall looming figure outside the window; to have it grasped and wrung in a way that made the proud girl's eyes flash their amazement, and the same little hand clench itself in displeasure, when it had hid itself like an outraged thing among the shining folds of her gown. Was this Coll Dhu mad, or rude?

The guest no longer refused to enter, but followed the white figure into a little study where a lamp burned; and the gloomy stranger, the bluff colonel, and the young mistress of the house, were fully discovered to each other's eyes. Evleen glanced at the new comer's dark face, and shuddered with a feeling of indescribable dread and dislike; then, to her father, accounted for the shudder after a popular fashion, saying lightly: "There is some one walking over my grave."

So Coll Dhu was present at Evleen Blake's birthday ball. Here he was, under a roof which ought to have been his own, a stranger, known only by a nickname, shunned and solitary. Here he was, who had lived among the eagles and foxes, lying in wait with a fell purpose, to be revenged on the son of his father's foe for poverty and disgrace, for the broken heart of a dead mother, for the loss of a self-slaughtered father, for the dreary scattering of brothers and sisters. Here he stood, a Samson shorn of his strength; and all because a haughty girl had melting eyes, a winning mouth, and looked radiant in satin and roses.

Peerless where many were lovely, she moved among her friends, trying to be unconscious of the gloomy fire of those strange eyes which followed her unwearicdly wherever she went. And when her father begged her to be gracious to the unsocial guest whom he would fain conciliate, she courteously conducted him to see the new picture-gallery adjoining the drawing-rooms; explained under what odd circumstances the colonel had picked up this little painting or that; using every delicate art her pride would allow to achieve her father's purpose, whilst maintaining at the same time her own personal reserve; trying to divert the guest's oppressive attention from herself to the objects for which she claimed his notice. Coll Dhu followed his conductress and listened to her voice, but what she said mattered nothing; nor did she wring many words of comment or reply from his lips, until they paused in a retired corner where the light was dim, before a window from which the curtain was withdrawn. The sashes were open, and nothing was visible but water; the night Atlantic, with the full moon riding high above a bank of clouds, making silvery tracks outward towards the distance of infinite mystery dividing two worlds. Here the following little scene is said to have been enacted.

"This window of my father's own planning, is it not creditable to his taste?" said the young hostess, as she stood, herself glittering like a dream of beauty, looking on the moonlight.

Coll Dhu made no answer; but suddenly, it is said, asked her for a rose from a cluster of flowers that nestled in the lace on her bosom.

For the second time that night Evleen Blake's eyes flashed with no gentle light. But this man was the saviour of her father. She broke off a blossom, and with such good grace, and also with such queen-like dignity as she might assume, presented it to him. Whereupon, not only was the rose seized, but also the hand that gave it, which was hastily covered with kisses.

Then her anger burst upon him.

"Sir," she cried, "if you are a gentleman you must be mad! If you are not mad, then you are not a gentleman!"

"Be merciful," said Coll Dhu; "I love you. My God, I never loved a woman before! Ah!" he cried, as a look of disgust crept over her face, "you hate me. You shuddered the first time your eyes met mine. I love you, and you hate me!"

"I do," cried Evleen, vehemently, forgetting everything but her indignation. "Your presence is like something evil to me. Love me?—your looks poison me. Pray, sir, talk no more to me in this strain."

"I will trouble you no longer," said Coll Dhu. And, stalking to the window, he placed one powerful hand upon the sash, and vaulted from it out of her sight.

Bare-headed as he was, Coll Dhu strode off to the mountains, but not towards his own home. All the remaining dark hours of that night he is believed to have walked the labyrinths of the hills, until dawn began to scatter the clouds with a high wind. Fasting, and on foot from sunrise the morning before, he was then glad enough to see a cabin right in his way. Walking in, he asked for water to drink, and a corner where he might throw himself to rest.

There was a wake in the house, and the kitchen was full of people, all wearied out with the night's watch; old men were dozing over their pipes in the chimney-corner, and here and there a woman was fast asleep with her head on a neighbour's knee. All who were awake crossed themselves when Coll Dhu's figure darkened the door, because of his evil name; but an old man of the house invited him in, and offering him milk, and promising him a roasted potato by-and-by, conducted him to a small room off the kitchen, one end of which was strewed with heather, and where there were only two women sitting gossiping over a fire.

"A thraveller," said the old man, nodding his head at the women, who nodded back, as if to say "he has the traveller's right." And Coll Dhu flung himself on the heather, in the furthest corner of the narrow room.

The women suspended their talk for a while; but presently, guessing the intruder to be asleep, resumed it in voices above a whisper.

There was but a patch of window with the grey dawn behind it, but Coll could see the figures by the firelight over which they bent: an old woman sitting forward with her withered hands extended to the embers, and a girl reclining against the hearth wall, with her healthy face, bright eyes, and crimson draperies, glowing by turns in the flickering blaze.

"I do' know," said the girl, "but it's the quarest marriage iver I h'ard of. Sure it's not three weeks since he tould right an' left that he hated her like poison!"

"Whist, asthoreen!" said the colliagh, bending forward confidentially; "throth an' we all know that o' him. But what could he do, the crature! When she put the burragh-bos on him!"

"The *what*?" asked the girl.

"Then the burragh-bos machree-o? That's the spanchel o' death, avourneen; an' well she has him tethered to her now, bad luck to her!"

The old woman rocked herself and stifled the Irish cry breaking from her wrinkled lips by burying her face in her cloak.

"But what is it?" asked the girl, eagerly. "What's the burragh-bos, anyways, an' where did she get it?"

"Och, och! it's not fit for comin' over to young ears, but cuggir (whisper), acushla! It's a sthrip o' the skin o' a corpse, peeled from the crown o' the head to the heel, without crack or split, or the charrm's broke; an' that, rowled up, an' put on a sthring roun' the neck o' the wan that's cowld by the wan that wants to be loved. An' sure enough it puts the fire in their hearts, hot an' sthrong, afore twinty-four hours is gone."

The girl had started from her lazy attitude, and gazed at her companion with eyes dilated by horror.

"Marciful Saviour!" she cried. "Not a sowl on airth would bring the curse out o' heaven by sich a black doin'!"

"Aisy, Biddeen alanna! an' there's wan that does it, an' isn't the divil. Arrah, asthoreen, did ye niver hear tell o' Pexie na Pishrogie, that lives betune two hills o' Maam Turk?"

"I h'ard o' her," said the girl, breathlessly.

"Well, sorra bit lie, but it's hersel' that does it. She'll do it for money any day. Sure they hunted her from the graveyard o' Salruck, where she had the dead raised; an' glory be to God! they would ha' murthered her, only they missed her thracks, an' couldn't bring it home to her afther."

"Whist, a-wauher" (my mother), said the girl; "here's the thraveller gettin' up to set off on his road again! Och, then, it's the short rest he tuk, the sowl!"

It was enough for Coll, however. He had got up, and now went back to the kitchen, where the old man had caused a dish of potatoes to be roasted, and earnestly pressed his visitor to sit down and eat of them. This Coll did readily; having recruited his strength by a meal, he betook himself to the mountains again, just as the rising sun was flashing among the waterfalls, and sending the night mists drifting down the glens. By sundown the same evening he was striding over the hills of Maam Turk, asking of herds his way to the cabin of one Pexie na Pishrogie.

In a hovel on, a brown desolate heath, with scared-looking hills flying off into the distance on every side, he found Pexie: a yellow-faced hag, dressed in a dark-red blanket, with elf-locks of coarse black hair protruding from under an orange kerchief swathed round her wrinkled jaws. She was bending over a pot upon her fire, where herbs were simmering, and she looked up with an evil glance when Coll Dhu darkened her door.

"The burragh-bos is it her honour wants?" she asked, when he had made known his errand. "Ay, ay; but the arighad, the arighad (money) for Pexie. The burragh-bos is ill to get."

"I will pay," said Coll Dhu, laying a sovereign on the bench before her.

The witch sprang upon it, and chuckling, bestowed on her visitor a glance which made even Coll Dhu shudder.

"Her honour is a fine king," she said, "an' her is fit to get the burragh-bos. Ha! ha! her sall get the burragh-bos from Pexie. But the arighad is not enough. More, more!"

She stretched out her claw-like hand, and Coll dropped another sovereign into it. Whereupon she fell into more horrible convulsions of delight.

"Hark ye!" cried Coll. "I have paid you well, but if your infernal charm does not work, I will have you hunted for a witch!"

"Work!" cried Pexie, rolling up her eyes. "If Pexie's charrm not work, then her honour come back here an' carry these bits o' mountain away on her back. Ay, her will work. If the colleen hate her honour like the old diaoul hersel', still an' withal her will love her honour like her own white sowl afore the sun sets or rises. That, (with a furtive leer,) or the colleen dhas go wild mad afore wan hour."

"Hag!" returned Coll Dhu; "the last part is a hellish invention of your own. I heard nothing of madness. If you want more money, speak out, but play none of your hideous tricks on me."

The witch fixed her cunning eyes on him, and took her cue at once from his passion.

"Her honour guess thrue," she simpered; "it is only the little bit more arighad poor Pexie want."

Again the skinny hand was extended. Coll Dhu shrank from touching it, and threw his gold upon the table.

"King, king!" chuckled Pexie. "Her honour is a grand king. Her honour is fit to get the burragh-bos. The colleen dhas sall love her like her own white sowl. Ha, ha!"

"When shall I get it?" asked Coll Dhu, impatiently.

"Her honour sall come back to Pexie in so many days, do-deag (twelve), so many days, fur that the burragh-bos is hard to get. The lonely

graveyard is far away, an' the dead man is hard to raise——"

"Silence!" cried Coll Dhu; "not a word more. I will have your hideous charm, but what it is, or where you get it, I will not know."

Then, promising to come back in twelve days, he took his departure. Turning to look back when a little way across the heath, he saw Pexie gazing after him, standing on her black hill in relief against the lurid flames of the dawn, seeming to his dark imagination like a fury with all hell at her back.

At the appointed time Coll Dhu got the promised charm. He sewed it with perfumes into a cover of cloth of gold, and slung it to a fine-wrought chain. Lying in a casket which had once held the jewels of Coll's broken-hearted mother, it looked a glittering bauble enough. Meantime the people of the mountains were cursing over their cabin fires, because there had been another unholy raid upon their graveyard, and were banding themselves to hunt the criminal down.

A fortnight passed. How or where could Coll Dhu find an opportunity to put the charm round the neck of the colonel's proud daughter? More gold was dropped into Pexie's greedy claw, and then she promised to assist him in his dilemma.

Next morning the witch dressed herself in decent garb, smoothed her elf-locks under a snowy cap, smoothed the evil wrinkles out of her face, and with a basket on her arm locked the door of the hovel, and took her way to the lowlands. Pexie seemed to have given up her disreputable calling for that of a simple mushroom-gatherer. The housekeeper at the grey house bought poor Muireade's mushrooms of her every morning. Every morning she left unfailingly a nosegay of wild flowers for Miss Evleen Blake, "God bless her! She had never seen the darling young lady with her own two longing eyes, but sure hadn't she heard tell of her sweet purty face, miles away!" And at last, one morning, whom should she meet but Miss Evleen herself returning alone from a ramble. Whereupon poor Muireade "made bold" to present her flowers in person.

"Ah," said Evleen, "it is you who leave me the flowers every morning? They are very sweet."

Muireade had sought her only for a look at her beautiful face. And now that she had seen it, as bright as the sun, and as fair as the lily, she would take up her basket and go away contented. Yet she lingered a little longer.

"My lady never walk up big mountain?" said Pexie.

"No," Evleen said, laughing; she feared she could not walk up a mountain.

"Ah yes; my lady ought to go, with more gran' ladies an' gentlemen, ridin' on purty little donkeys, up the big mountain. Oh, gran' things up big mountain for my lady to see!"

Thus she set to work, and kept her listener enchained for an hour, while she related wonderful stories of those upper regions. And as Evleen looked up to the burly crowns of the hills, perhaps she thought there might be sense in this wild old woman's suggestion. It ought to be a grand world up yonder.

Be that as it may, it was not long after this when Coll Dhu got notice that a party from the grey house would explore the mountains next day; that Evleen Blake would be of the number; and that he, Coll, must prepare to house and refresh a crowd of weary people, who in the evening should be brought, hungry and faint, to his door. The simple mushroom gatherer should be discovered laying in her humble stock among the green places between the hills, should volunteer to act as guide to the party, should lead them far out of their way through the mountains and up and down the most toilsome ascents and across dangerous places; to escape safely from which, the servants should be told to throw away the baskets of provisions which they carried.

Coll Dhu was not idle. Such a feast was set forth, as had never been spread so near the clouds before. We are told of wonderful dishes furnished by unwholesome agency, and from a place believed much hotter than is necessary for purposes of cookery. We are told also how Coll Dhu's barren chambers were suddenly hung with curtains of velvet, and with fringes of gold; how the blank white walls glowed with delicate colours and gilding; how gems of pictures sprang into sight between the panels; how the tables blazed with plate and gold, and glittered with the rarest glass; how such wines flowed, as the guests had never tasted; how servants in the richest livery, amongst whom the wizen-faced old man was a mere nonentity, appeared, and stood ready to carry in the wonderful dishes, at whose extraordinary fragrance the eagles came pecking to the windows, and the foxes drew near the walls, snuffing. Sure enough, in all good time, the weary party came within sight of the Devil's Inn, and Coll Dhu sallied forth to invite them across his lonely threshold. Colonel Blake (to whom Evleen, in her delicacy, had said no word of the solitary's strange behaviour to herself) hailed his appearance with delight, and the whole party sat down to Coll's banquet in high good humour. Also, it is said, in much amazement at the magnificence of the mountain recluse.

All went in to Coll's feast, save Evleen Blake, who remained standing on the threshold of the outer door; weary, but unwilling to rest there; hungry, but unwilling to eat there. Her white cambric dress was gathered on her arms, crushed and sullied with the toils of the day; her bright cheek was a little sun-burned; her small dark head with its braids a little tossed, was bared to the mountain air and the glory of the sinking sun; her hands were loosely tangled in the strings of her hat; and her foot sometimes tapped the threshold stone. So she was seen.

The peasants tell that Coll Dhu and her father came praying her to enter, and that the magni-

ficent servants brought viands to the threshold; but no step would she move inward, no morsel would she taste.

"Poison, poison!" she murmured, and threw the food in handfuls to the foxes, who were snuffing on the heath.

But it was different when Muireade, the kindly old woman, the simple mushroom-gatherer, with all the wicked wrinkles smoothed out of her face, came to the side of the hungry girl, and coaxingly presented a savoury mess of her own sweet mushrooms, served on a common earthen platter.

"An' darlin', my lady, poor Muireade her cook them hersel', an' no thing o' this house touch them or look at poor Muireade's mushrooms."

Then Evleen took the platter and ate a delicious meal. Scarcely was it finished when a heavy drowsiness fell upon her, and, unable to sustain herself on her feet, she presently sat down upon the door-stone. Leaning her head against the framework of the door, she was soon in a deep sleep, or trance. So she was found.

"Whimsical, obstinate little girl!" said the colonel, putting his hand on the beautiful slumbering head. And taking her in his arms, he carried her into a chamber which had been (say the story-tellers) nothing but a bare and sorry closet in the morning, but which was now fitted up with Oriental splendour. And here on a luxurious couch she was laid, with a crimson coverlet wrapping her feet. And here in the tempered light coming through jewelled glass, where yesterday had been a coarse rough-hung window, her father looked his last upon her lovely face.

The colonel returned to his host and friends, and by-and-by the whole party sallied forth to see the after-glare of a fierce sunset swathing the hills in flames. It was not until they had gone some distance that Coll Dhu remembered to go back and fetch his telescope. He was not long absent. But he was absent long enough to enter that glowing chamber with a stealthy step, to throw a light chain around the neck of the sleeping girl, and to slip among the folds of her dress the hideous glittering burragh-bos.

After he had gone away again, Pexie came stealing to the door, and, opening it a little, sat down on the mat outside, with her cloak wrapped round her. An hour passed, and Evleen Blake still slept, her breathing scarcely stirring the deadly bauble on her breast. After that, she began to murmur and moan, and Pexie pricked up her ears. Presently a sound in the room told that the victim was awake and had risen. Then Pexie put her face to the aperture of the door and looked in, gave a howl of dismay, and fled from the house, to be seen in that country no more.

The light was fading among the hills, and the ramblers were returning towards the Devil's Inn, when a group of ladies who were considerably in advance of the rest, met Evleen Blake advancing towards them on the heath, with her hair disordered as by sleep, and no covering on her head. They noticed something bright, like gold, shifting and glancing with the motion of her figure. There had been some jesting among them about Evleen's fancy for falling asleep on the door-step instead of coming in to dinner, and they advanced laughing, to rally her on the subject. But she stared at them in a strange way, as if she did not know them, and passed on. Her friends were rather offended, and commented on her fantastic humour; only one looked after her, and got laughed at by her companions for expressing uneasiness on the wilful young lady's account.

So they kept their way, and the solitary figure went fluttering on, the white robe blushing, and the fatal burragh-bos glittering in the reflexion from the sky. A hare crossed her path, and she laughed out loudly, and clapping her hands, sprang after it. Then she stopped and asked questions of the stones, striking them with her open palm because they would not answer. (An amazed little herd sitting behind a rock, witnessed these strange proceedings.) By-and-by she began to call after the birds, in a wild shrill way, startling the echoes of the hills as she went along. A party of gentlemen returning by a dangerous path, heard the unusual sound and stopped to listen.

"What is that?" asked one.

"A young eagle," said Coll Dhu, whose face had become livid; "they often give such cries."

"It was uncommonly like a woman's voice!" was the reply; and immediately another wild note rang towards them from the rocks above: a bare saw-like ridge, shelving away to some distance ahead, and projecting one hungry tooth over an abyss. A few more moments and they saw Evleen Blake's light figure fluttering out towards this dizzy point.

"My Evleen!" cried the colonel, recognising his daughter, "she is mad to venture on such a spot!"

"Mad!" repeated Coll Dhu. And then dashed off to the rescue with all the might and swiftness of his powerful limbs.

When he drew near her, Evleen had almost reached the verge of the terrible rock. Very cautiously he approached her, his object being to seize her in his strong arms before she was aware of his presence, and carry her many yards away from the spot of danger. But in a fatal moment Evleen turned her head and saw him. One wild ringing cry of hate and horror, which startled the very eagles and scattered a flight of curlews above her head, broke from her lips. A step backward brought her within a foot of death.

One desperate though wary stride, and she was struggling in Coll's embrace. One glance in her eyes, and he saw that he was striving with a mad woman. Back, back, she dragged him, and he had nothing to grasp by. The rock was slippery and his shod feet would not cling to it. Back, back! A hoarse panting, a dire swinging to and fro; and then the rock was

standing naked against the sky, no one was there, and Coll Dhu and Evleen Blake lay shattered far below.

III.

TO BE TAKEN AT THE DINNER-TABLE.

Does any one know who gives the names to our streets? Does any one know who invents the mottoes which are inserted in the cracker-papers, along with the sugar-plums?—I don't envy him his intellectual faculties, by-the-by, and I suspect him to be the individual who translates the books of the foreign operas. Does any one know who introduces the new dishes, Kromeski's, and such-like? Does any one know who is responsible for new words, such as shunt and thud, shimmer, ping (denoting the crack of the rifle), and many others? Does any one know who has obliged us to talk for ever about "fraternising" and "cropping up"? Does any one know the Sage to whom perfumers apply when they have invented a shaving-soap, or hair-wash, and who furnishes the trade with such names for their wares as Rypophagon, Euxesis, Depilatory, Bostrakeison? Does any one know who makes the riddles?

To the last question—only—I answer, Yes; *I* know.

In a certain year, which, I don't mind mentioning may be looked upon as included in the present century, I was a little boy—a sharp little boy, though I say it, and a skinny little boy. The two qualities not unfrequently go together. I will not mention what my age was at the time, but I was at school not far from London, and I was of an age when it is customary, or *was* customary, to wear a jacket and frill.

In riddles, I had at that early age a profound and solemn joy. To the study of those problems, I was beyond measure addicted, and in the collecting of them I was diligent in the extreme. It was the custom at the time for certain periodicals to give the question of a conundrum in one number, and the answer in the next. There was an interval of seven days and nights between the propounding of the question, and the furnishing of the reply. What a time was that for me! I sought the solution of the enigma, off and on (generally on), during the leisure hours of the week (no wonder I was skinny!), and sometimes, I am proud to remember, I became acquainted with the answer before the number containing it reached me from the official source. There was another kind of puzzle which used to appear when my sharp and skinny boyhood was at its sharpest and skinniest, by which I was much more perplexed than by conundrums or riddles conveyed in mere words. I speak of what may be called symbolical riddles—rebus is, I believe, their true designation—little squalid woodcuts representing all sorts of impossible objects huddled together in incongruous disorder; letters of the alphabet, at times, and even occasionally fragments of words, being introduced here and there, to add to the general confusion. Thus you would have: a Cupid mending a pen, a gridiron, the letter x, a bar of music, p. u. g. and a fife—you would have these presented to you on a certain Saturday, with the announcement that on the following Saturday there would be issued an explanation of the mysterious and terrific jumble. That explanation would come, but with it new difficulties worse than the former. A birdcage, a setting sun (not like), the word "snip," a cradle, and some quadruped to which it would have puzzled Buffon himself to give a name. With these problems I was not successful, never having solved but one in my life, as will presently appear. Neither was I good at poetical riddles, in parts—slightly forced—as "My first is a boa-constrictor, My second's a Roman lictor, My third is a Dean and Chipter, And my whole goes always on tip-ter." These were too much for me.

I remember on one occasion accidentally meeting with a publication in which there was a rebus better executed than those to which I had been accustomed, and which mystified me greatly. First of all there was the letter A; then came a figure of a clearly virtuous man in a long gown, with a scrip, and a staff, and a cockle-shell on his hat; then followed a representation of an extremely old person with flowing white hair and beard; the figure 2 was the next symbol, and beyond this was a gentleman on crutches, looking at a five-barred gate. Oh, how that rebus haunted me! It was at a sea-side library that I met with it during the holidays, and before the next number came out I was back at school. The publication in which this remarkable picture had appeared was an expensive one, and quite beyond my means, so there was no way of getting at the explanation. Determined to conquer, and fearing that one of the symbols might escape my memory, I wrote them down in order. In doing so, an interpretation flashed upon me. A—Pilgrim—Age—To—Cripple—Gate. Ah! was it the right one? Had I triumphed, or had I failed? My anxiety on the subject attained such a pitch at last, that I determined to write to the editor of the periodical in which the rebus had appeared, and implore him to take compassion upon me and relieve my mind. To that communication I received no answer. Perhaps there was one in the notices to correspondents—but then I must have purchased the periodical to get it.

I mention these particulars because they had something—not a little—to do with a certain small incident which, small though it was, had influence on my after life. The incident in question was the composition of a riddle by the present writer. It was composed with difficulty, on a slate; portions of it were frequently rubbed out, the wording of it gave me a world of trouble, but the work was achieved at last. "Why," it was thus that I worded it in its

final and corrected form, "Why does a young gentleman who has partaken freely of the pudding, which at this establishment precedes the meat, resemble a meteor?—Because he's effulgent—a full gent!"

Hopeful, surely! Nothing unnaturally premature in the composition. Founded on a strictly boyish grievance. Possessing a certain archæological interest in its reference to the now obsolete practice of administering pudding before meat at educational establishments, with the view of damping the appetite (and constitution) of the pupils.

Though inscribed upon perishable and greasy slate, in ephemeral slate-pencil, my riddle lived. It was repeated. It became popular. It was all over the school, and at last it came to the ears of the master. That unimaginative person had no taste for the fine arts. I was sent for, interrogated as to whether this work of art was the product of my brain, and, having given an answer in the affirmative, received a distinct, and even painful, punch on the head, accompanied by specific directions to inscribe straightway the words "Dangerous Satirising," two thousand times, on the very slate on which my riddle had been originally composed.

Notwithstanding this act of despotism on the part of the unappreciative Beast who invariably treated me as if I were not profitable (when I knew the contrary), my reverence for the great geniuses who have excelled in the department of which I am speaking, grew with my growth, and strengthened with &c. Think of the pleasure, the rapture, which Riddles afford to persons of wholesomely constituted mind! Think of the innocent sense of triumph felt by the man who propounds a riddle to a company, to every member of which it is a novelty. He alone is the proprietor of the answer. His is a glorious position. He keeps everybody waiting. He wears a calm and placid smile. He has the rest at his mercy. He is happy——innocently happy.

But who makes the Riddles?

I DO.

Am I going to let out a great mystery? Am I going to initiate the uninitiated? Am I going to let the world know *how it is done?*

Yes. I am.

It is done in the main by the Dictionary; but the consultation of that work of reference, with a view to the construction of riddles, is a process so bewildering—it puts such a strain upon the faculties—that at first you cannot work at it for more than a quarter of an hour at once. The process is terrific. First of all you get yourself thoroughly awake and on the alert—it is good to run the fingers through the hair roughly at this crisis—then you take your Dictionary, and, selecting a particular letter, you go down the column, stopping at every word that looks in the slightest degree promising, drawing back from it as artists draw back from a picture to see it the better, twisting it, and turning it, and if it yield nothing, passing on to the next. With the substantives you occupy yourself in an especial manner, as more may be done with them than with any of the other parts of speech; while as to the words with two meanings, you must be in a bad state indeed, or have particularly ill luck, if you fail to get something out of them.

Suppose that you are going in for a day's riddling—your dinner depending on the success of your efforts. I take your Dictionary, and open it at hap-hazard. You open, say, among the Fs, and you go to work.

You make several stoppages as you go down the column. You pause naturally at the word Felt. It is a past participle of the verb to feel, and it is a substance used in making hats. You press it hard. Why is a hatter—No—Why may a hatter invariably be looked upon as a considerate person? Because he has always *felt* for—No. That won't do. You go on. "Fen"—a chance here for a well-timed thing about the Fenian Brotherhood. This is worth a struggle, and you make a desperate one. A Fen is a marsh. In a marsh there is mud. Why was it always to be expected that the Irish rebels must ultimately stick in the mud? Because theirs was a *Fen*-ian movement.—Intolerable! Yet you are loth to abandon the subject. A Fen is a Morass. More-ass. Why is an Irish rebel more ass than knave? No, again it won't do!

Disconsolate, but dogged, you go on till you arrive at "Fertile." Fer-tile. Tile—Tile, a Hat. Why is a Hat made of Beaver, like land that always yields fine crops? Because it may be called Fertile (Fur-tile). That will do. Not first-class, but it will do. Riddling is very like fishing. Sometimes you get a small trout, sometimes a large one. This is a small trout, but it shall go into the basket, nevertheless. And now you are fairly warming to your work. You come to "Forgery." You again make a point. Forgery. For-gery—For Jerry. A complicated riddle of a high order. Intricate, and of the Coleridge kind. Why—No, If—If a gentleman, having a favourite son of tender years, named Jeremiah, were in the course of dessert to put a pear in his pocket, stating, as he did so, that the fruit was intended for his beloved boy, why, in making such an explanation, would he mention a certain act of felony once punishable by death?—Because he would say that it was Forgery—For Jerry. Into the basket.

It never rains but it pours. Another complex one, of the same type. Fungus! If a well-bred lady should, in sport, poke her cousin *Augustus* in the ribs with her lilac and white parasol, and hurt him, what vegetable product would she mention in facetiously apologising? Fungus. Fun Gus! In with it.

The Fs being exhausted, you take a short rest. Then, screwing your faculties up afresh, and seizing the Dictionary again, you open it once more. Cs this time lie before you, a page of Cs. You pause, hopeful, at corn. The word has two meanings, it ought to answer. It shall be made to answer. This is a case of a peculiar kind. You determine to construct a

riddle by rule. There is no genius needed here. The word has two meanings; both shall be used; it is a mechanical process. Why is a reaper at his work, like a chiropodist?—Because he's a corn-cutter. Made by rule, complete, impregnable; but yet not interesting. The Cs are not propitious, and you apply to the Bs. In your loitering mood you drop down upon the word "Bring," and with idiotcy at hand sit gazing at it. Suddenly you revive—Bring, Brought, Brought up. Brought up will do. Why is the coal-scuttle which Mary has conveyed from the kitchen to the second floor, like an infant put out to dry-nurse?—Because it's brought up by hand. You try once more, and this time it is the letter H on which your hopes depend. The columns under H, duly perused, bring you in due time to Horse. Why is a horse attached to the vehicle of a miser, like a war-steamer of the present day?—Because he's driven by a screw. Another? Hoarse. Why is a family, the members of which have always been subject to sore-throats, like "The Derby?"—Because it's a hoarse-race (Horse-race).

It is by no means always the case, however, that the Dictionary affords so large a yield as this. It is hard work—exhausting work—and, worst of all, *there is no end to it*. You get, after a certain time, incapable of shaking off the shop even in your moments of relaxation. Nay, worse. You feel as if you *ought* to be always at it, lest you should miss a good chance, that would never return. It is this that makes epigrammatic literature wearing. If you go to the play, if you take up a newspaper, if you ensconce yourself in a corner with a blessed work of fiction, you find yourself still pursued and haunted by your profession. The dialogue to which you listen when you go to the theatre, the words of the book you are reading, may suggest something, and it behoves you to be on the look-out. Horrible and distracting calling! You may get rid of your superfluous flesh more quickly by going through a course of riddling, than by running up-hill in blankets for a week together, or going through a systematic course of Turkish baths.

Moreover, the cultivator of epigrammatic literature has much to undergo in the disposal of his wares, when they are once ready for the market. There is a public sale for them, and, between ourselves, there is a private ditto. The public demand for the article, which it has been so long my lot to supply, is not large, nor, I am constrained to say, is it entirely cordial. The periodicals in which your rebus or your conundrum appears hebdomadally, are not numerous; nor are the proprietors of such journals respectfully eager for this peculiar kind of literature. The conundrum or the rebus will knock about the office for a long time, and, perhaps, only get inserted at last because it fits a vacant space. When we *are* inserted, we always—always mind—occupy an ignoble place. We come in at the bottom of a column, or occupy the very last lines of the periodical in which we appear—in company with that inevitable game at chess in which white is to check-mate in four moves. One of the best riddles—*the* best, I think, that I ever made—was knocking about at the office of a certain journal six weeks before it got before the public. It ran thus: Why is a little man who is always telling long stories about nothing, like a certain new kind of rifle? Answer: Because he's a small-bore.

This work was the means of bringing me acquainted with the fact that there was a Private as well as a Public sale for the productions of the epigrammatic artist. A gentleman, who did not give his name—neither will I give it, though I know it well—called at the office of the periodical in which this particular riddle appeared, on the day succeeding its publication, and asked for the name and address of its author. The sub-editor of the journal, a fast friend of mine, to whom I owe many a good turn, furnished him with both, and, on a certain day, a middle-aged gentleman of rather plethoric appearance, with a sly twinkle in his eye, and with humorous lines about his mouth—both eye and mouth were utter impostors, for my friend had not a particle of humour in his composition—came gasping up my stairs, and introducing himself as an admirer of genius—"and therefore," he added, with a courteous wave of the hand, "your very humble servant"—wished to know whether it would suit my purpose to supply him, from time to time, with certain specimens of epigrammatic literature, now a riddle, now an epigram, now a short story that could be briefly and effectively told, all of which should be guaranteed to be entirely new and original, which should be made over wholly and solely to him, and to which no other human being should have access on any consideration whatever. My gentleman added that he was prepared to pay very handsomely for what he had, and, indeed, mentioned terms which caused me to open my eyes to the fullest extent of which those organs are capable.

I soon found out what my friend Mr. Price Scrooper was at. I call him by this name (which is fictitious, but something like his own), for the sake of convenience. He was a diner-out, who held a somewhat precarious reputation, which, by hook or crook, he had acquired as a sayer of good things, a man sure to have the last new story at the end of his tongue. Mr. Scrooper liked dining-out above all things, and the horror of that day when there should come a decline in the number of his invitations was always before his eyes. Thus it came about that relations were established between us—between me, the epigrammatic artist, and Price Scrooper, the diner-out.

I fitted him with a good thing or two even on the very day of his paying me a first visit. I gave him a story which I remembered to have heard my father tell when I was an infant—a perfectly safe story, which had been buried for years in oblivion. I supplied him with a riddle or two which I happened to have by me, and which were so very bad that no company could ever suspect them of a professional origin. I set

him up in epigram for some time, and he set me up in the necessaries of life for some time, and so we parted mutually satisfied.

The commercial dealings thus satisfactorily established were renewed steadily and at frequent intervals. Of course, as in all earthly relations, there were not wanting some unpleasant elements to qualify the generally comfortable arrangements. Mr. Scrooper would sometimes complain that some of the witticisms with which I had supplied him, had failed in creating an effect—had hardly proved remunerative, in short. What could I reply? I could not tell him that this was his fault. I told him a story given by Isaac Walton, of a clergyman who, hearing a sermon preached by one of his cloth with immense effect, asked for the loan of it. On returning the sermon, however, after having tried it on his own congregation, he complained that it had proved a total failure, and that his audience had responded in no degree to his eloquence. The answer of the original proprietor of the sermon was crushing: "I lent you," he said, "indeed, my fiddle, but not my fiddle-stick;" meaning, as Isaac explains, rather unnecessarily, "the manner and intelligence with which the sermon was to be delivered."

My friend did not seem to feel the application of this anecdote. I believe he was occupied, while I spoke, in committing the story to his memory for future use—thus getting it gratuitously out of me—which was mean.

In fact, Mr. Scrooper, besides his original irreparable deficiency, was getting old and stupid, and would often forget or misapply the point of a story, or the answer to a conundrum. With these last I supplied him freely, working really hard to prepare for his use such articles as were adapted to his peculiar exigencies. As a diner-out, riddles of a convivial sort—alluding to matters connected with the pleasures of the table—are generally in request, and with a supply of these I fitted Mr. Scrooper, much to his satisfaction. Here are some specimens, for which I charged him rather heavily:

Why is wine—observe how easily this is brought in after dinner—why is wine, made up for the British market, like a deserter from the army?

Because it's always brandied (branded) before it's sent off.

Why is a ship, which has to encounter rough weather before it reaches its destination, like a certain wine which is usually adulterated with logwood and other similar matters?

Because it goes through a vast deal before it comes into port.

What portion of the trimming of a lady's dress resembles East India sherry of the first quality?

That which goes round the Cape.

One of his greatest difficulties, my patron told me—for he was as frank with me as a man is with his doctor or his lawyer—was in remembering which were the houses where he had related a certain story, or propounded a certain conundrum; who were the people to whom such and such a riddle would be fresh; who were the people to whom it was already but too familiar. Mr. Scrooper had also a habit of sometimes asking the answer to a riddle instead of the question, which was occasionally productive of confusion; or, giving the question properly, he would, when his audience became desperate and gave it up, supply them with the answer to an altogether different conundrum.

One day, my patron came to me in a state of high indignation. A riddle—bran new, and for which I had demanded a high price, thinking well of it myself—had failed, and Mr. Scrooper came to me in a rage to expostulate.

"It fell as flat as ditch-water," he said. "Indeed, one very disagreeable person said there was nothing in it, and he thought there must be some mistake. A very nasty thing to say, considering that the riddle was given as my own. How could I be mistaken in my own riddle?"

"May I ask," said I, politely, "how you worded the question?"

"Certainly. I worded it thus: Why are we justified in believing that the pilgrims to Mecca, undertake the journey with mercenary motives?"

"Quite right," said I; "and the answer?"

"The answer," replied my patron, "was as you gave it me: Because they go for the sake of Mahomet."

"I am not surprised," I said, coldly, for I felt that I had been unjustly blamed, "that your audience was mystified. The answer, as I gave it to you, ran thus: Because they go for the sake of the profit (Prophet)!"

Mr. Scrooper subsequently apologised.

I draw near to the end of my narrative. The termination is painful, so is that of King Lear. The worst feature in it is, that it involves the acknowledgment of a certain deplorable piece of weakness on my own part.

I was really in the receipt of a very pretty little income from Mr. Scrooper, when one morning I was again surprised by a visit from a total stranger—again, as on a former occasion, a middle-aged gentleman—again an individual with a twinkling eye and a humorous mouth—again a diner-out, with two surnames—Mr. Kerby Postlethwaite I will call him, which is sailing as near the wind as I consider safe.

Mr. Kerby Postlethwaite came on the errand which had already brought Mr. Scrooper to the top of my stairs. He, too, had seen one of my productions in a certain journal (for I still kept up my relation with the public press), and he too having a similar reputation to maintain, and finding his brain at times rather sterile, had come to me to make exactly the same proposal which had already been made by Mr. Price Scrooper.

For a time the singularity of the coincidence absolutely took my breath away, and I remained staring speechlessly at my visitor in a manner which might have suggested to him that I was hardly the man to furnish him with anything very brilliant. However, I managed to recover

myself in time. I was very guarded and careful in my speech, but finally expressed my readiness to come to terms with my new employer. These were soon settled: Mr. Kerby Postlethwaite having even more liberal views as to this part of the business than those entertained by Mr. Price Scrooper.

The only difficulty was to supply this gentleman quickly enough with what he wanted. He was in a hurry. He was going that very evening to a dinner-party, and it was supremely important that he should distinguish himself. The occasion was a special one. It must be something good. He would not stick at a trifle in the matter of terms, but he did want something super-excellent. A riddle—a perfectly new riddle—he would like best.

My stores were turned over, my desk was ransacked, and still he was not satisfied. Suddenly it flashed into my mind that I had something by me which would exactly do. The very thing; a riddle alluding to a subject of the day; a subject just at that time in everybody's mouth. One which there would be no difficulty in leading up to. In short, a very neat thing indeed. There was but one doubt in my mind. Had I already sold it to my original employer? That was the question, and for the life of me I could not answer it with certainty. The life of one addicted to such pursuits as mine, is chaotic; and with me more particularly, doing an extensive public *and* private trade, it was especially so. I kept no books, nor any record of my professional transactions. One thing which influenced me strongly to believe the riddle to be still unappropriated, was, that I had certainly received no intelligence as to its success or failure from Mr. Scrooper, whereas that gentleman never failed to keep me informed on that momentous point. I was in doubt, but I ended (so princely were the terms offered by my new patron) in giving myself the benefit of that doubt, and handing over the work of art in question to Mr. Kerby Postlethwaite.

If I were to say that I felt comfortable after having brought this transaction to a close, I should not speak the truth. Horrible misgivings filled my mind, and there were moments when, if it had been possible to undo what was done, I should have taken that retrogressive step. This, however, was out of the question. I didn't even know where my new employer was to be found. I had nothing for it but to wait and try my best to feel sanguine.

The circumstances which distinguished the evening of that eventful day on which I first received a visit from my new patron, were subsequently related to me with great accuracy, and not without rancorous comment, by both of those who sustained leading parts in the evening's performances. Yes, terrible to relate, on the following day both my patrons came to me, overflowing with fury, to tell me what had happened, and to denounce me as the first cause of the mischief. Both were furious, but my more recent acquaintance, Mr. Postlethwaite, was the more vehement in his wrath.

It appeared, according to this gentleman's statement, that having repaired at the proper time to the residence of the gentleman whose guest he was to be that evening, and who, he took occasion to inform me, was a personage of consideration, he found himself in the midst of a highly distinguished company. He had intended to be the last arrival, but a fellow named Scrooper, or Price, or something of that sort—both names, perhaps—was yet expected. He soon arrived, however, Mr. Postlethwaite said, and the company went down to dinner.

Throughout the meal, the magnificent nature of which I will not dilate upon, these two gentlemen were continually at loggerheads. They appear—and in this both the accounts which reached me tally—to have contradicted each other, interrupted each other, cut into each other's stories, on every occasion, until that sort of hatred was engendered between them which Christian gentlemen sharing a meal together do sometimes feel towards each other. I suspect that each had heard of the other as a "diner-out," though they had not met before, and that each was prepared to hate the other.

Adhering to the Postlethwaitean narrative faithfully, I find that all this time, and even when most aggravated by the conduct of my earliest patron, he was able to comfort himself with the reflection that he had by him in store the weapon wherewith, when the proper moment should arrive, to inflict the coup de grace upon his rival. That weapon was my riddle—my riddle fitted to a topic of the day.

The moment arrived. I shudder as I proceed. The meal was over, the wines had circulated once, and Mr. Kerby Postlethwaite began gently insidiously and with all the dexterity of an old performer, to lead the conversation in the direction of THE TOPIC. His place was very near to the seat occupied by my original patron, Mr. Price Scrooper. What was Mr. Postlethwaite's astonishment to hear that gentleman leading such conversation, as was within his jurisdiction, *also* in the direction of THE TOPIC! "Does he see that I want a lead, and is he playing into my hands?" thought my newest client. "Perhaps he's not such a bad fellow, after all. I'll do as much for him another time." This amicable view of the matter was but of brief duration. Madness was at hand! Two voices were presently heard speaking simultaneously:

MR. PRICE SCROOPER. The subject suggested a riddle to me this morning, as I was thinking it over.

MR. KERBY POSTLETHWAITE. A view of the thing struck me in the light of a riddle, this morning, quite suddenly.

} Both speaking at once.

The two were silent, each having stopped the other.

"I beg your pardon," said my first patron, with ferocious politeness, "you were saying that you——"

"Had made a riddle," replied my second

patron. "Yes. I think that you also alluded to your having done something of the sort?"

"I did."

There was silence all round the table. Some illustrious person broke it at last by saying, "What a strange coincidence!"

"At all events," cried the master of the house, "let us hear one of them. Come, Scrooper, you spoke first."

"Mr. Postlethwaite, I insist upon having your riddle," said the lady of the house, with whom Mr. P. was the favourite.

Under these circumstances both gentlemen paused, and then, each bursting forth suddenly, there was a renewal of duet.

MR. PRICE SCROOPER. Why does the Atlantic cable, in its present condition—

MR. KERBY POSTLETHWAITE. Why does the Atlantic cable, in its present condition—

} Both speaking at once.

At this there was a general roar and commotion among those present. "Our riddles appear to be somewhat alike?" remarked Mr. Postlethwaite, in a bitter tone, and looking darkly at my first patron.

"It is the most extraordinary thing," replied that gentleman, "that I ever heard of!"

"Great wits jump," said the illustrious person who had previously spoken of an "extraordinary coincidence."

"At any rate, let us hear one of them," cried the host. "Perhaps they vary after the first few words. Come, Scrooper."

"Yes, let us hear one of them to the end," said the lady of the house, and she looked at Mr. Postlethwaite. This last, however, was sulky. Mr. Price Scrooper took advantage of the circumstance to come out with the conundrum in all its integrity.

"Why," asked this gentleman once more, "is the Atlantic cable, in its present condition, like a schoolmaster?"

"That is my riddle," said Mr. Postlethwaite, as soon as the other had ceased to speak. "I made it myself."

"On the contrary, it is mine, I assure you," replied Mr. Scrooper, very doggedly. "I composed it while shaving this morning."

Here again there was a pause, broken only by interjectional expressions of astonishment on the part of those who were present—led by the illustrious man.

Again the master of the house came to the rescue. "The best way of settling it," he said, "will be to ascertain which of our two friends knows the answer. Whoever knows the answer can claim the riddle. Let each of these gentlemen write down the answer on a piece of paper, fold it up, and give it to me. If the answers are identical, the coincidence will indeed be extraordinary."

"It is impossible that any one but myself *can* know the answer," remarked my first patron, as he wrote on his paper and folded it.

My second patron wrote also, and folded. "The answer," he said, "*can* only be known to me."

The papers were unfolded by the master of the house, and read one after the other.

ANSWER written by Mr. Price Scrooper: "Because it's supported by buoys (boys)."

ANSWER written by Mr. Kerby Postlethwaite: "Because it's supported by buoys (boys)."

There was a scene. There were recriminations. As I have said, on the following morning both gentlemen visited me betimes. They had not much to say after all. Were they not both in my power?

The curious thing is, that from that time dates the decline of my professional eminence. Of course, both my patrons took leave of me for ever. But I have also to relate that my powers of riddling took leave of me also. My mornings with the Dictionary became less and less productive of results, and, only a fortnight ago last Wednesday, I sent to a certain weekly publication a rebus presenting the following combination of objects: A giraffe, a haystack, a boy driving a hoop, the letter X, a crescent, a human mouth, the words "I wish," a dog standing on its hind legs, and a pair of scales. It appeared. It took. It puzzled the public. But for the life of me I cannot form the remotest idea what it meant, and I am ruined.

IV.

NOT TO BE TAKEN FOR GRANTED.

To-day I, Eunice Fielding, have been looking over the journal which I kept of the first few weeks of my life in the world, after I left the seclusion of the German Moravian school, where I was educated. I feel a strange pity for myself, the tender ignorant innocent school-girl, freed from the peaceful shelter of the Moravian settlement, and thrust suddenly into the centre of a sorrowful household.

As I turn to this first page, there rises before me, like the memory of a former life, a picture of the noiseless grass-grown streets of the settlement, with the old-fashioned dwellings, and the quiet and serene faces looking out kindly upon the troop of children passing to the church. There is the home of the Single Sisters, with its shining and spotless casements; and close beside it, is the church where they and we worshipped, with its broad central aisle always separating the women from the men. I can see the girls in their picturesque caps, trimmed with scarlet, and the blue ribbons of the matrons, and the pure white head-gear of the widows; the burial-ground, where the separation is still maintained, and where the brethren and the sisters lie in undivided graves; and the kindly simple-hearted pastor, who was always touched with the feeling of our weakness. I see it all, as I turn over the pages of my short journal, with just a faint longing to return to the repose and innocent ignorance which encircled me while I dwelt among them, safely shut in from the sorrows of the world.

Nov. 7. At home once more after an absence of three years; but home is changed. There used to be a feeling of mother's presence everywhere about the house, even if she were in the remotest room; but now, Susannah and Priscilla are wearing her apparel, and as they go in and out, and I catch a glimpse of the soft dove-coloured folds of the dresses, I look up with a start, half in hope of seeing my mother's face again. They are much older than I am, for Priscilla was ten years of age when I was born, and Susannah is three years older than Priscilla. They are very grave and serious, and it is well known, even in Germany, how religious they are. I suppose by the time I am as old as they are, I shall be the same.

I wonder if my father ever felt like a child; he looks as if he had lived for centuries. Last night I could not venture to look too closely into his face; but to-day I can see a very kind and peaceful expression underlying all the wrinkles and lines of care. In his soul there is a calm serene depth which no tempest can touch. That is plain. He is a good man, I know, though his goodness was not talked about at school, as was Susannah's and Priscilla's. When the coach set me down at the door, and he ran out into the street bareheaded, and took me at once into his arms, carrying me like a little child into our home, all my sorrow upon leaving my schoolfellows, and the sisters, and our pastor, vanished away in the joy of being with him. God helping me—and surely he will help me to do this—I will be a comfort to my father.

The house is very different to what it was in my mother's time. The rooms look gloomy, for the walls are damp and mildewed, and the carpets are worn threadbare. It seems as if my sister had taken no pride in household matters. To be sure Priscilla is betrothed to one of the brethren, who dwells in Woodbury, about ten miles from here. She told me last night what a beautiful house he had, and how it was furnished with more luxury and costliness than our people often care for, inasmuch as we do not seek worldly show. She also displayed the fine linen she has been preparing for herself, with store of dresses, both in silks and stuffs. They looked so grand, spread out upon the poor furniture of our chamber, that I could not help but cast up in my own mind what the cost would be, and I inquired how my father's business prospered: at which Priscilla coloured, but Susannah uttered a low deep groan, which was answer enough.

This morning I unpacked my trunk, and gave a letter from the church to each of my sisters. It was to make known to them that Brother Schmidt, a missionary in the West Indies, desires that a fitting wife should be chosen for him by casting of lots, and sent out to him. Several of the single sisters in our settlement have given in their names, and such is the repute of Susannah and Priscilla, that they are notified of the application, that they may do likewise. Of course Priscilla, being already betrothed, has no thought of doing so; but Susannah has been deep in meditation all day, and now she is sitting opposite to me, pale and solemn, her brown hair, in which I can detect a silver thread or two, braided closely down her thin cheeks; but as she writes, a faint blush steals over her face, as if she were listening to Brother Schmidt, whom she has never seen, and whose voice she never heard. She has written her name—I can read it, "Susannah Fielding"—in her clear round steady hand, and it will be put into the lot with many others, from among which one will be drawn out, and the name written thereon will be that of Brother Schmidt's appointed wife.

Nov. 9. Only two days at home; but what a change there is in me. My brain is all confusion, and it might be a hundred years since I left school. This morning two strangers came to the house, demanding to see my father. They were rough hard men, whose voices sounded into my father's office, where he was busy writing, while I sat beside the fire, engaged in household sewing. I looked up at the loud noise of their voices, and saw him turn deadly pale, and bow his white-haired head upon his hands. But he went out in an instant, and returning with the strangers, bade me go to my sisters. I found Susannah in the parlour, looking scared and bewildered, and Priscilla in hysterics. After much ado they grew calmer, and when Priscilla was lying quiet on the sofa, and Susannah had sat down in mother's arm-chair to meditate, I crept back to my father's office, and rapping softly at the door, heard him say, "Come in." He was alone, and very sad.

"Father," I asked, "what is the matter?" and seeing his dear kind face, I flew to him.

"Eunice," he whispered very tenderly, "I will tell you all."

So then as I knelt at his knee, with my eyes fastened upon his, he told me a long history of troubles, every word of which removed my school-days farther and farther from me, and made them seem like the close of a finished life. The end of all was that these men were sent by his creditors to take possession of everything in our old home, where my mother had lived and died.

I caught my breath at first, as if I should go into hysterics like Priscilla, but I thought what good would that do for my father? So after a minute or two I was able to look up again bravely into his eyes. He then said he had his books to examine, so I kissed him, and came away.

In the parlour Priscilla was lying still, with her eyelids closed, and Susannah was quite lost in meditation. Neither of them noticed me entering or departing. I went into the kitchen to consult Jane about my father's dinner. She was rocking herself upon a chair, and rubbing her eyes red with her rough apron; and there in the elbow-chair which once belonged to my grandfather—all the Brethren knew George Fielding—sat one of the strangers, wearing a shaggy brown hat, from under which he was

staring fixedly at a bag of dried herbs hanging to a hook in the ceiling. He did not bring his eyes down, even when I entered, and stood thunderstruck upon the door-sill; but he rounded up his large mouth, as if he were going to whistle.

"Good morning, sir," I said, as soon as I recovered myself; for my father had said we must regard these men only as the human instruments permitted to bring affliction to us; "will you please to tell me your name?"

The stranger fixed his eyes steadily upon me. After which he smiled a little to himself.

"John Robins is my name," he said, "and England is my nation, Woodbury is my dwelling-place, and Christ is my salvation."

He spake in a sing-song tone, and his eyes went up again to the bag of marjoram, twinkling as if with great satisfaction; and I pondered over his reply, until it became quite a comfort to me.

"I'm very glad to hear it," I said, at last, "because we are religious people, and I was afraid you might be different."

"Oh, I'll be no kind of nuisance, miss," he answered; "you make yourselves comfortable, and only bid Maria, here, to draw me my beer regular, and I'll not hurt your feelings."

"Thank you," I said. "Jane, you hear what Mr. Robins says. Bring some sheets down to air, and make up the bed in the Brothers' chamber. You'll find a bible and hymn-book on the table there, Mr. Robins." I was leaving the kitchen, when this singular man struck his clenched fist upon the dresser, with a noise which startled me greatly.

"Miss," he said, "don't you put yourself about; and if anybody else should ever put you out, about anything, remember John Robins of Woodbury. I'm your man for anything, whether in my line or out of my line; I am, by——"

He was about to add something more, but he paused suddenly, and his face grew a little more red, as he looked up again to the ceiling. So I left the kitchen.

I have since been helping my father with his books, being very thankful that I was always quick at sums.

P.S. I dreamed that the settlement was invaded by an army of men, led by John Robins, who insisted upon becoming our pastor.

November 10. I have been a journey of fifty miles, one half of it by stage-coach. I learned for the first time that my mother's brother, a worldly rich man, dwells fifteen miles beyond Woodbury. He does not belong to our people, and he was greatly displeased by my mother's marriage. It also appears that Susannah and Priscilla were not my mother's own daughters. My father had a little forlorn hope that our worldly kinsman might be inclined to help us in our great extremity; so I went forth with his blessings and prayers upon my errand. Brother More, who came over to see Priscilla yesterday, met me at Woodbury Station, and saw me safely on the coach for my uncle's village. He is much older than I fancied; and his face is large, and coarse, and flabby-looking. I am surprised that Priscilla should betroth herself to him. However, he was very kind to me, and watched the coach out of the inn-yard; but almost before he was out of my sight, he was out of my mind, and I was considering what I should say to my uncle.

My uncle's house stands quite alone in the midst of meadows and groves of trees, all of which are leafless now, and waved to and fro in the damp and heavy air, like funeral plumes. I trembled greatly as I lifted the brass knocker, which had a grinning face upon it; and I let it fall with one loud single rap, which set all the dogs barking, and the rooks cawing in the tops of the trees. The servant conducted me across a low-roofed hall, to a parlour beyond: low-roofed also, but large and handsome, with a warm glow of crimson, which was pleasant to my eyes, after the grey gloom of the November day. It was already afternoon; and a tall fine-looking old man was lying comfortably upon a sofa fast asleep; while upon the other side of the hearth sat a dwarfed old lady, who lifted her fore-finger with a gesture of silence, and beckoned me to take a seat near the fire. I obeyed, and presently fell into a meditation.

At length a man's voice broke the silence, asking in a drowsy tone,

"What young lass is this?"

"I am Eunice Fielding," I replied, rising with reverence to the aged man, my uncle; and he gazed upon me with his keen grey eyes, until I was abashed, and a tear or two rolled down my cheeks in spite of myself, for my heart was very heavy.

"By Jove!" he exclaimed, "as like Sophy as two peas out of one pod!" and he laughed a short laugh, which, in my ears, lacked merriment. "Come here, Eunice," he added, "and kiss me."

Whereupon I walked gravely across the open space between us, and bent my face to his; but he would have me to sit upon his knee, and I, who had been at no time used to be fondled thus, even by my father, sat there uncomfortably.

"Well, my pretty one," said my uncle, "what is your errand and request to me? Upon my soul, I feel ready to promise thee anything."

As he spake, I bethought me of King Herod, and the sinful dancing-girl, and my heart sank within me; but at last I took courage, as did Esther the queen, and I made known my urgent business to him, telling him, even with tears, that my father was threatened with a prison, if he could find none to befriend him.

"Eunice," said my uncle, after a very long silence, "I will make a bargain with you and your father. He stole away my favourite sister from me, and I never saw her face again. I've no children, and I'm a rich man. If your father will

give you up to me, keeping no claim upon you—even to never seeing your face again, if I so will it—then I will pay all his debts, and adopt you as my own daughter."

Before he could finish all these words, I sprang away from him, feeling more angered than I had ever done in my life.

"It could never be," I cried. "My father could never give me up, and I will never leave him."

"Be in no hurry to decide, Eunice," he said; "your father has two other daughters. I will give you an hour to reflect."

Upon that he and his wife left me alone in the pleasant room. My mind was firmly made up from the beginning. But as I sat before the glowing fire, it seemed as if all the bleak cold days of the coming winter trooped up and gathered round me, chilling the warm atmosphere of the room, and touching me with icy fingers, until I trembled like a coward. So I opened my little lot-book, which our pastor had given unto me, and I looked anxiously at the many slips of paper it contained. Many times I had drawn a lot from it, and found but vague counsel and comfort. But I now drew therefrom again, and the words upon the lot were, "Be of good courage!" Then I was greatly strengthened.

When the hour was ended, my uncle returned, and urged me with many worldly persuasions and allurements, mingled with threatenings, until at length I grew bold to answer him according to his snares.

"It is an evil thing," I said, "to tempt a child to forsake her father. Providence has put it into your power to lessen the sorrows of your fellow-creatures, but you seek to add to them. I would rather dwell with my father in a jail, than with you in a palace."

I turned and left him, finding my way out through the hall into the deepening twilight. It was more than a mile from the village through which the coach passed; and the hedge-banks rose high on each side of the deep lane. Though I walked very swiftly, the night came on before I had proceeded far from my uncle's house, with such thick gloom and fog that I could almost feel the darkness. "Be of good courage, Eunice!" said I; and to drive away the fears which lay in wait for me if I yielded but a little, I lifted up my voice, and began to sing our Evening Hymn.

Suddenly a voice a little way before me, took up the tune, in a clear deep rich tone, like that of the Brother who taught us music in the Settlement. As I stopped instantly, my heart leaping up with fear and a strange gladness, the voice before me ceased singing also.

"Good night," it said. There was such kindness and frankness and sweetness in the voice, that I trusted it at once.

"Wait for me," I said; "I am lost in the night, and I want to find my way to Longville."

"I am going there too," said the voice, to which I drew nearer each moment; and immediately I saw a tall dark figure in the mist beside me.

"Brother," I said, trembling a little, though wherefore I knew not. "are we far from Longville?"

"Only ten minutes' walk," he answered, in a blithe tone, which cheered me not a little. "Take my arm, and we shall soon be there."

As my hand rested on his arm lightly, I felt a sense of great support and protection. As we came near the lighted window of the village inn, we looked into one another's faces. His was pleasant and handsome, like some of the best pictures I have ever seen. I do not know why, but I thought of the Angel Gabriel.

"We are at Longville," he said; "tell me where I can take you to."

"Sir," I answered, for I could not say Brother to him in the light; "I wish first to get to Woodbury."

"To Woodbury," he repeated, "at this time of night, and alone! There is a return coach coming up in a few minutes, by which I travel to Woodbury. Will you accept of my escort there?"

"Sir, I thank you," I answered; and I stood silent beside him, until the coach lamps shone close upon us in the fog. The stranger opened the door, but I hung back with a foolish feeling of shame at my poverty, which it was needful to conquer.

"We are poor people," I stammered. "I must travel outside."

"Not such a winter's night as this," he said. "Jump in."

"No, no," I replied, recovering my senses, "I shall go outside." A decent country woman, with a child, were already seated on the top of the coach, and I quickly followed them. My seat was the outer one, and hung over the wheels. The darkness was so dense that the fitful glimmer of the coach-lamps upon the leafless hedge-rows was the only light to be seen. All else was black, pitchy night. I could think of nothing but my father, and the jail opening to imprison him. Presently I felt a hand laid firmly on my arm, and Gabriel's voice spake to me:

"Your seat is a dangerous one," he said. "A sudden jerk might throw you off."

"I am so miserable," I sobbed, all my courage breaking down; and in the darkness I buried my face in my hands, and wept silently; and even as I wept, the bitterness of my sorrow was assuaged.

"Brother," I said—for in the darkness I could call him so again. "I am only just come home from school, and I have not learned the ways and troubles of the world yet."

"My child," he answered, in a low tone, "I saw you lean your head upon your hands and weep. Can I be of any help to you?"

"No," I replied; "the sorrow belongs to me only, and to my house."

He said no more, but I felt his arm stretched out to form a barrier across the space where I might have fallen; and so through the black night we rode on to Woodbury.

Brother More was awaiting me at the coach-office. He hurried me away, scarcely giving me time to glance at Gabriel, who stood looking after me. He was eager to hear of my interview with my uncle; when I told him of my failure, he grew thoughtful, saying little until I was in the railway carriage, when he leaned forward and whispered, "Tell Priscilla I will come over in the morning."

Brother More is a rich man; perhaps, for Priscilla's sake, he will free my father.

Nov. 11. I dreamed last night that Gabriel stood beside me, saying, "I come to bring thee glad tidings." But as I listened eagerly, he sighed, and vanished away.

Nov. 15. Brother More is here every day, but he says nothing about helping my father. If help does not come soon, he will be cast into prison. Peradventure, my uncle will relent, and offer us some easier terms. If it were only to live half my time with him, I would consent to dwell in his house, even as Daniel and the three children dwelt unharmed in the court of Babylon. I will write to him to that effect.

Nov. 19. No answer from my uncle. To-day, going to Woodbury with Priscilla, who wished to converse with the pastor of the church there, I spent the hour she was engaged with him in finding my way to the jail, and walking round the outside of its gloomy and massive walls. I felt very mournful and faint-hearted, thinking of my poor father. At last, being very weary, I sat down on the step at the gateway, and looked into my little lot-book again. Once more I drew the verse, "Be of good courage." Just then, Brother More and Priscilla appeared. There was a look upon his face which I disliked, but I remembered that he was to be my sister's husband, and I rose and offered him my hand, which he tucked up under his arm, his fat hand resting upon it. So we three walked to and fro under the prison walls. Suddenly, in a garden sloping away beneath us, I perceived him whom I call Gabriel (not knowing any other name), with a fair sweet-looking young woman at his side. I could not refrain from weeping, for what reason I cannot tell, unless it be my father's affairs. Brother More returned home with us, and sent John Robins away. John Robins desired me to remember him, which I will as long as I live.

Nov. 20. Most miserable day. My poor father is in jail. At dinner-time to-day two most evil-looking men arrested him. God forgive me for wishing they were dead! Yet my father spake very patiently and gently.

"Send for Brother More," he said, after a pause, "and act according to his counsel."

So after a little while they carried him away.

What am I to do?

Nov. 30. Late last night we were still discoursing as to our future plans. Priscilla thinks Brother More will hasten their marriage, and Susannah has an inward assurance that the lot will fall to her to be Brother Schmidt's wife. She spake wisely of the duties of a missionary's life, and of the grace needed to fulfil them. But I could think of nothing but my father trying to sleep within the walls of the jail.

Brother More says he thinks he can see a way to release my father, only we are all to pray that we may have grace to conquer our self-will. I am sure I am willing to do anything, even to selling myself into slavery, as some of our first missionaries did in the slave-times in the West Indies. But in England one cannot sell one's self, though I would be a very faithful servant. I want to get at once a sum large enough to pay our debts. Brother More bids me not spoil my eyes with crying.

Dec. 1. The day on which my father was arrested, I made a last appeal to my uncle. This morning I had a brief note from him, saying he had commissioned his lawyer to visit me, and state the terms on which he was willing to aid me. Even as I read it, his lawyer desired to see me alone. I went to the parlour, trembling with anxiety. It was no other than Gabriel who stood before me, and I took heart, remembering my dream that he appeared to me, saying, "I come to bring thee glad tidings."

"Miss Eunice Fielding," he said, in his pleasant voice, and looking down upon me with a smile which seemed to shed sunshine upon my sad and drooping spirit.

"Yes," I answered, my eyes falling foolishly before his; and I beckoned to him to resume his seat, while I stood leaning against my mother's great arm-chair.

"I have a hard message for you," said Gabriel; "your uncle has dictated this paper, which must be signed by you and your father. He will release Mr. Fielding, and settle one hundred pounds a year upon him, on condition that he will retire to some German Moravian settlement, and that you will accept the former terms."

"I cannot," I cried bitterly. "Oh! sir, ought I to leave my father?"

"I am afraid not," he answered, in a low voice.

"Sir," I said, "you must please say 'no' to my uncle."

"I will," he replied, "and make it sound as gently as I can. You have a friend in me, Miss Eunice."

His voice lingered upon Eunice, as if it were no common name to him, but something rare and pleasing. I never heard it spoken so pleasantly before. After a little while he rose to take his leave.

"Brother," I said, giving him my hand, "farewell."

"I shall see you again, Miss Eunice," he answered.

He saw me again sooner than he expected, for I travelled by the next train to Woodbury, and, as I left the dark carriage in which I journeyed, I saw him alight from another part of the train, and at the same instant his eyes fell upon me.

"Where are you going to now, Eunice?" he demanded.

It seemed a pleasanter greeting than if he had called me Miss. I told him I knew my way to the jail, for that I had been not long ago to look at the outside of it. I saw the tears stand in his eyes, but, without speaking, he drew my hand through his arm, and I silently, but with a very lightened heart, walked beside him to the great portal of my father's prison.

We entered a square court, with nothing to be seen save the grey winter sky lying, as it were flat, overhead; and there was my father, pacing to and fro, with his arms crossed upon his breast and his head bowed down, as if it would never be raised again. I cried aloud, and ran and fell on his neck, and knew nothing more until I opened my eyes in a small bare room, and felt my father holding me in his arms, and Gabriel kneeling before me, chafing my hands, and pressing his lips upon them.

Afterwards Gabriel and my father conferred together; but before long Brother More arrived, whereupon Gabriel departed. Brother More said, solemnly:

"That man is a wolf in sheep's clothing, and our Eunice is a tender lamb."

I cannot believe that Gabriel is a wolf.

Dec. 2. I have taken a room in a cottage near the jail, the abode of John Robins and his wife, a decent tidy woman. So I can spend every day with my father.

Dec. 13. My father has been in prison a whole fortnight. Brother More went over to see Priscilla last night, and this morning he is to lay before us his plan for my father's release. I am going to meet him at the jail.

When I entered the room, my father and Brother More looked greatly perturbed, and my poor father leaned back in his chair, as if exhausted after a long conflict.

"Speak to her, brother," he said.

Then Brother More told us of a heavenly vision which had appeared to him, directing him to break off his betrothal to Priscilla, and to take me—*me!*—for his wife. After which he awoke, and these words abode in his mind, "The dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure."

"Therefore, Eunice," he said, in an awful voice, "do you and Priscilla see to it, lest you should be found fighting against the Lord."

I was struck dumb as with a great shock, but I heard him add these words:

"I was also instructed in the vision, to set your father free, upon the day that you become my wife."

"But," I said at last, my whole heart recoiling from him, "this would be a shameful wrong to Priscilla. It cannot be a vision from Heaven, but a delusion and snare. Marry Priscilla, and set my father free? Surely, surely, it was a lying vision."

"No," he said, fastening his gaze upon me; "I chose Priscilla rashly of my own judgment. Therein I erred; but I have promised her half her dowry as a compensation for my error."

"Father," I cried, "surely I ought to have some direction also, as well as he. Why should only he have a vision?" Then I added that I would go home and see Priscilla, and seek a sign for my own guidance.

December 14. Priscilla was ill in bed when I reached home, and refused to see me. I arose at five o'clock this morning, and stole down into the parlour. As I lighted the lamp, the parlour looked forlorn and deserted, and yet there lingered about it a ghostly feeling, as if perhaps my mother, and the dead children whom I never saw, had been sitting on the hearth in the night, as we sat in the daytime. Maybe she knew of my distress, and had left some tokens for my comfort and counsel. My Bible lay upon the table, but it was closed; her angel fingers had not opened it upon any verse that might have guided me. There was no mode of seeking direction, save by casting of lots.

I cut three little slips of paper of one length, and exactly similar—*three*, though surely I only needed two. Upon the first I wrote, "To be Brother More's wife," and upon the second, "To be a Single Sister." The third lay upon the desk, blank and white, as if waiting for some name to be written upon it, and suddenly all the chilly cold of the winter morning passed into a sultry heat, until I threw open the casement, and let the frosty air breathe upon my face. I said in my own heart I would leave myself a chance, though my conscience smote me for that word "chance." So I laid the three slips of paper between the leaves of my Bible, and sat down opposite to them, afraid of drawing the lot which held the secret of my future life.

There was no mark to guide me in the choice of one slip of paper from another; and I dared not stretch out my hand to draw one of them. For I was bound to abide by the solemn decision. It seemed too horrible to become Brother More's wife; and to me the Sisters' Home, where the Single Sisters dwell, having all things in common, seems dreary and monotonous and somewhat desolate. But if I should draw the blank paper! My heart fluttered; again and again I stretched out my hand, and withdrew it; until at last the oil in the lamp being spent, its light grew dimmer and dimmer, and, fearful of being still longer without guidance, I snatched the middle lot from between the leaves of my Bible. There was only a glimmer of dying light, by which I read the words, "To be Brother More's wife."

That is the last entry in my journal, written three years ago.

When Susannah came down stairs and entered the parlour, she found me sitting before my desk, almost in an idiotic state, with that miserable lot in my hand. There was no need to explain it to her; she looked at the other slip of paper, one blank, and the other inscribed, "To be a Single Sister," and she knew I had been casting lots. I remember her crying over me a little, and kissing me with unaccustomed tenderness; and

then she returned to her chamber, and I heard her speaking to Priscilla in grave and sad tones. After that, we were all passive; even Priscilla was stolidly resigned. Brother More came over, and Susannah informed him of the irrevocable lot which I had drawn; but besought him to refrain from seeing me that day; and he left me alone to grow somewhat used to the sense of my wretchedness.

Early the next morning I returned to Woodbury; my only consolation being the thought that my dear father would be set free, and might live with me in wealth and comfort all the rest of his life. During the succeeding days I scarcely left his side, never suffering Brother More to be alone with me; and morning and night John Robins or his wife accompanied me to the gate of the jail, and waited for me to return with them to their cottage.

My father was to be set free, only on my wedding-day, and the marriage was hurried on. Many of Priscilla's store of wedding garments were suitable for me. Every hour brought my doom nearer.

One morning, in the gloom and twilight of a December dawn, I suddenly met Gabriel in my path. He spake rapidly and earnestly, but I scarcely knew what he said, and I answered, falteringly:

"I am going to be married to Brother Joshua More on New Year's-day, and he will then release my father."

"Eunice," he cried, standing before me in the narrow path, "you can never marry him. I know the fat hypocrite. Good Heaven! I love you a hundred times better than he does. Love! The rascal does not know what it means."

I answered not a word, for I felt afraid both of myself and him, though I did not believe Gabriel to be a wolf in sheep's clothing.

"Do you know who I am?" he asked.

"No," I whispered.

"I am your uncle's nephew by marriage," he said, "and I have been brought up in his house. Break off this wicked marriage with the fellow More, and I will engage to release your father. I am young, and can work. I will pay your father's debts."

"It is impossible," I replied. "Brother More has had a heavenly vision, and I have drawn the lot. There is no hope. I must marry him upon New Year's-day."

Then Gabriel persuaded me to tell him the whole story of my trouble. He laughed a little, and bade me be of good comfort; and I could not make him understand how impossible it was that I should contend against the dispensation of the lot.

Always when I was with my father I strove to conceal my misery, talking to him of the happy days we should spend together some time. Likewise I sang within the walls of the prison, the simple hymns which we had been wont to sing in the peaceful church at school amid a congregation of serene hearts, and I strengthened my own heart and my father's by the recollected counsels of my dear lost pastor. Thus my father guessed little of my hidden suffering, and looked forward with hope to the day that would throw open his prison doors.

Once I went to the pastor, dwelling in Woodbury, and poured out my heart to him—save that I made no mention of Gabriel—and he told me it was often thus with young girls before their marriage, but that I had a clear leading; he also told me that Brother More was a devout man, and I should soon love and reverence him as my husband.

At length the last day of the year came; a great day among our people, when we drew our lot for the following year. Everything seemed at an end. All hope fled from me, if there ever had been any hope in my heart. I left my father early in the evening, for I could no longer conceal my wretchedness; yet when I was outside the prison walls I wandered to and fro, hovering about it, as if these days, miserable as they had been, were happy to those which were drawing near. Brother More had not been near us all day, but doubtless he was busy in his arrangements to release my father. I was still lingering under the great walls, when a carriage drove up noiselessly—for the ground was sprinkled with soft snow—and Gabriel sprang out, and almost clasped me in his arms.

"My dear Eunice," he said, "you must come with me at once. Our uncle will save you from this hateful marriage."

I do not know what I should have done had not John Robins called out from the driver's seat, "All right, Miss Eunice; remember John Robins."

Upon that I left myself in Gabriel's hands, and he lifted me into the carriage, wrapping warm coverings about me. It seemed to me no other than a happy dream, as we drove noiselessly along snowy roads, with the pale wan light of the young moon falling upon the white country, and now and then shining upon the face of Gabriel, as he leaned forward from time to time to draw the wrappers closer round me.

We might have been three hours on the way, when we turned into a by-road, which presently I recognised as the deep lane wherein I had first met Gabriel. We were going then to my uncle's house. So with a lightened heart I stepped out of the carriage, and entered his doors for the second time.

Gabriel conducted me into the parlour which I had seen before, and placed me in a chair upon the hearth, removing my shawl and bonnet with a pleasant and courteous care; and he was standing opposite to me, regarding me with a smile upon his handsome face, when the door opened and my uncle entered.

"Come and kiss me, Eunice," he said; and I obeyed him wonderingly.

"Child," he continued, stroking my hair back from my face, "you would not come to me of your own will, so I commissioned this young

fellow to kidnap you. We are not going to have you marry Joshua More. I cannot do with him as my nephew. Let him marry Priscilla."

There was such a hearty tone in my uncle's voice, that for a moment I felt comforted, though I knew that he could not set aside my lot. So he seated me beside him, while I still looked with wonderment into his face.

"I am going to draw a lot for you," he said, with an air of mer riment; "what would my little rosebud say to her fat suitor, if she knew that her father was a freed man at this moment?"

I dared not look into his face or into Gabriel's. For I remembered that I myself had sought for a token; and that no earthly power could set aside that, or the heavenly vision also, which Brother More had seen.

"Uncle," I said, shuddering, "I have no voice in this matter. I drew the lot fairly, and I must abide by it. You cannot help me."

"We will see," he answered; "it is New Year's-eve, you know, and time to draw again. The lot will neither be to become Brother More's wife, nor a Single Sister, I promise you. We shall draw the blank this time!"

While I yet wondered at these words, I heard a sound of footsteps in the hall, and the door opened, and my beloved father stood upon the threshold, stretching out his arms to me. How he came there I knew not; but I flew to him with a glad cry, and hid my face upon his breast.

"You are welcome, Mr. Fielding," said my uncle; "Phil!"—it did now appear that Gabriel's name was Philip—"bring Mr. More this way."

I started with fright and wonder, and my father also looked troubled, and drew me nearer to his side. Brother More entered with a cowardly and downcast mien, which made him appear a hundred-fold more repulsive in my eyes, as he stood near the door, with his craven face turned towards us.

"Mr. More," said my uncle, "I believe you are to marry my niece, Eunice Fielding, to-morrow?"

"I did not know she was your niece," he answered, in an abject tone. "I would not have presumed——"

"But the heavenly vision, Mr. More?" interrupted my uncle.

He looked round for a moment, with a spiritless glance, and his eyes sank.

"It was a delusion," he muttered.

"It was a lie!" said Gabriel.

"Mr. More," continued my uncle, "if the heavenly vision be true, it will cost you the sum of five thousand five hundred pounds, the amount in which you are indebted to me, with sundry sums due to my nephew here. Yet if it be true, you must abide by it, of course."

"It was not true," he answered; "the vision was concerning Priscilla, to whom I was betrothed. I was ensnared to change the name to that of Eunice."

"Then go and marry Priscilla," said my uncle, good humouredly. "Philip, take him away."

But Priscilla would have no more to do with Brother More, and shortly afterwards she settled among the Single Sisters in the same settlement where I had lived my quiet and peaceful youth. Her store of wedding garments, which had been altered to fit me, came in at last for Susannah, who was chosen to be the wife of Brother Schmidt, according to her inward assurance; and she went out to join him in the West Indies, from whence she writes many happy letters. I was troubled for a time about my lot, but certainly if Brother More's vision was concerning Priscilla, I could not be required to abide by it. Moreover, I never saw him again. My uncle and father, who had never met before, formed a close friendship, and my uncle would hear of nothing but that we should dwell together in his large mansion, where I might be as a daughter unto both of them. People say we have left the Church of the United Brethren; but it is not so. Only, as I had found one evil man within it, so also I have found some good men without it.

Gabriel is not one of the Brethren.

V.

TO BE TAKEN IN WATER.

Minnie, my blessed little wife, and I, had been just one month married. We had returned only two days from our honeymoon tour at Killarney. I was a junior partner in the firm of Schwarzmoor and Laddock, bankers, Lombard-street (I must conceal real names), and I had four days more of my leave of absence still to enjoy. I was supremely happy in my bright new cottage south-west of London, and was revelling in delicious idleness on that bright October morning, watching the great yellow leaves fall in the sunshine. Minnie sat by me under the hawthorn-tree; otherwise, I should *not* have been supremely happy.

Little Betsy, Minnie's maid, came fluttering down the garden with an ominous-looking letter in her hand.

It was a telegram from Mr. Schwarzmoor. It contained only these words:

"We want you to start to the Continent directly with specie. Neapolitan loan. No delay. Transactions of great importance since you left. Sorry to break up holiday. Be at office by 6.30. Start from London Bridge by 9.15, and catch Dover night boat."

"Is the boy gone?"

"Boy did not leave it, sir. Elderly gentleman, going to Dawson's, brought it. The office boy was out, and the gentleman happened to be coming past our house."

"Herbert dear, you won't go, you mustn't go," said Minnie, leaning on my shoulder, and bending down her face. "Don't go."

"I must, my dearest. The firm has no one to

trust to, but me, in such a case. It is but a week's absence. I must start in ten minutes, and catch the 4.20 on its way up."

"That was a very important telegram," I said sharply to the station-master, "and you ought not to have sent it by any unknown and unauthorised person. Who *was* this old gentleman, pray?"

"Who was it, Harvey?" said the station-master, rather sulkily, to the porter.

"Old gent, sir, very respectable, as comes to the Dawsons', the training-stables. Has horses there."

"Do not let that sort of thing occur again, Mr. Jennings," I said, "or I shall be obliged to report it. I wouldn't have had that telegram mislaid, for a hundred pounds."

Mr. Jennings, the station-master, grumbled something, and then boxed the telegraph boy's ears. Which seemed to do him (Mr. Jennings) good.

"We were getting very anxious," said Mr. Schwarzmoor, as I entered the bank parlour, only three minutes late. "Very anxious, weren't we, Goldrick?"

"Very anxious," said the little neat head clerk. "Very anxious."

Mr. Schwarzmoor was a full faced man of about sixty, with thick white eyebrows and a red face—a combination which gave him an expression of choleric old age. He was a shrewd severe man of business: a little impetuous and fond of rule, but polite, kind, and considerate.

"I hope your charming wife is quite well. Sorry, indeed, to break up your holiday; but no help for it, my dear fellow. There is the specie in those two iron boxes, enclosed in leather to look like samples. They are fastened with letter-locks, and contain a quarter of a million in gold. The Neapolitan king apprehends a rebellion." (It was three years before Garibaldi's victories.) "You will take the money to Messrs. Pagliavicini and Rossi, No. 172 Toledo, Naples. The names that open the locks are, on the one with the white star on the cover, Masinisa; on the one with the black star, Cotopaxo. Of course you will not forget the talismanic words. Open the boxes at Lyons, to make sure that all is safe. Talk to no one. Make no friends on the road. Your commission is of vast importance."

"I shall pass," said I, "for a commercial traveller."

"Pardon me for my repeated cautions, Blamyre, but I am an older man than you, and know the danger of travelling with specie. If your purpose was known to-night in Paris, your road to Marseilles would be as dangerous as if all the galley-slaves at Toulon had been let loose in special chase of you. I do not doubt your discretion: I only warn you to be careful. Of course, you go armed?"

I opened my coat, and showed a belt under my waistcoat, with a revolver in it. At which warlike spectacle the old clerk drew back in alarm.

"Good!" said Mr. Schwarzmoor. "But one grain of prudence is worth five times the five bullets in those five barrels. You will stop in Paris to-morrow to transact business with Lefebre and Desjeans, and you will go on by the 12.15 (night) to Marseilles, catching the boat on Friday. We will telegraph to you at Marseilles. Are the letters for Paris ready, Mr. Hargrave?"

"Yes, sir, nearly ready. Mr. Wilkins is hard at them."

I reached Dover by midnight, and instantly engaged four porters to carry my specie chests down the stone steps leading from the pier to the Calais boat. The first was taken on board quite safely; but while the second was being carried down, one of the men slipped, and would certainly have fallen into the water, had he not been caught in the arms of a burly old Indian officer, who, laden with various traps, and urging forward his good-natured but rather vulgar wife, was preceding me.

"Steady there, my lad," he said. "Why, what have you got there? Hardware?"

"Don't know, sir; I only know it's heavy enough to break any man's back," was the rough answer, as the man thanked his questioner in his blunt way.

"These steps, sir, are very troublesome for bringing down heavy goods," said an obliging voice behind me. "I presume, sir, from your luggage, that we are of the same profession?"

I looked round as we just then stepped on board. The person who addressed me was a tall thin man, with a long and rather Jewish nose, and a narrow elongated face. He wore a great-coat too short for him, a flowered waistcoat, tight trousers, a high shirt collar, and a light sprigged stiff neckcloth.

I replied that I *had* the honour to be a commercial traveller, and that I thought we were going to have a rough night of it.

"Decidedly dirty night," he replied; "and I advise you, sir, to secure a berth at once. The boat, I see, is very crowded."

I went straight to my berth, and lay down for an hour; at the end of that time I got up and looked around me. At one of the small tables sat half a dozen of the passengers, including the old Indian and my old-fashioned interrogator. They were drinking bottled porter, and appeared very sociable. I rose and joined them, and we exchanged some remarks not complimentary to night travelling.

"By Jove, sir, it is simply unbearable!" said the jovial Major Baxter (for he soon told us his name); "it is as stifling as Peshawah when the hot Tinsang wind is blowing; suppose we three go on deck and take a little air? My wife suffers in these crossings; she's invisible, I know, till the boat stops. Steward, bring up some more bottled porter."

When we got on deck, I saw, to my extreme surprise, made conspicuous by their black and white stars, four other cases exactly similar to mine, except that they had no painted brand upon them. I could hardly believe my eyes; but there they were; leather covers, letter-locks, and all.

"Those are mine, sir," remarked Mr. Levison (I knew my fellow-commercial's name from the captain's having addressed him by it). "I am travelling for the house of Mackintosh. Those cases contain waterproof palctots, the best made. Our house has used such cases for forty years. It is sometimes inconvenient, this accidental resemblance of luggage—leads to mistakes. Your goods are much heavier than my goods, as I judge? Gas improvements, railway chairs, cutlery, or something else in iron?"

I was silent, or I made some vague reply.

"Sir," said Levison, "I augur well of your future; trade secrets should be kept inviolate. Don't you think so, sir?"

The major thus appealed to, replied, "Sir, by Jove, you're right! One cannot be too careful in these days. Egad, sir, the world is a mass of deceit."

"There's Calais light!" cried some one at that moment; and there it was, straight ahead, casting sparkles of comfort over the dark water.

I thought no more of my travelling companions. We parted at Paris: I went my way and they went their way. The major was going to pay a visit at Dromont, near Lyons; thence he would go to Marseilles en route for Alexandria. Mr. Levison was bound for Marseilles, like myself and the major, but not by my train—at least he feared not—as he had much to do in Paris.

I had transacted my business in the French capital, and was on my way to the Palais Royal, with M. Lefebre fils, a great friend of mine. It was about six o'clock, and we were crossing the Rue St. Honoré, when there passed us a tall Jewish-looking person, in a huge white mackintosh, whom I recognised as Mr. Levison. He was in a hired open carriage, and his four boxes were by his side. I bowed to him, but he did not seem to notice me.

"Eh bien! That drôle, who is that?" said my friend, with true Parisian superciliousness.

I replied that it was only a fellow-passenger, who had crossed with me the night before.

In the very same street I ran up against the major and his wife, on their way to the railway station.

"Infernal city, this," said the major; "smells so of onion. I should like, if it was mine, to wash it out, house by house; 'tain't wholesome, 'pon my soul 'tain't wholesome. Julia, my dear, this is my pleasant travelling companion of last night. By-the-by, just saw that commercial traveller! Sharp business man that: no sight-seeing about *him*. Bourse and bank all day,—senior partner some day."

"And how many more?" said my friend Lefebre, when we shook hands and parted with the jolly major. "That is a good boy—he superabounds—he overflows—but he is one of your epicurean lazy officers, I am sure. Your army, it must be reformed, or India will slip from you like a handful of sand—vous verrez, mon cher."

Midnight came, and I was standing at the terminus, watching the transport of my luggage, when a cab drove up, and an Englishman leaping out asked the driver in excellent French for change for a five-franc piece. It was Levison; but I saw no more of him, for the crowd just then pushed me forward

I took my seat with only two other persons in the carriage—two masses of travelling cloak and capote—two bears, for all I could see to the contrary.

Once away from the lights of Paris, and in the pitch dark country, I fell asleep and dreamed of my dear little wife, and our dear little home. Then a feeling of anxiety ran across my mind. I dreamed that I had forgotten the words with which to open the letter-locks. I ransacked mythology, history, science, in vain. Then I was in the banking parlour at No. 172 Toledo, Naples, threatened with instant death by a file of soldiers, if I did not reveal the words, or explain where the boxes had been hid; for I had hidden them for some inscrutable no reason. At that moment an earthquake shook the city, a flood of fire rolled past beneath the window, Vesuvius had broken loose and was upon us. I cried in my agony—"Gracious Heaven, reveal to me those words!" when I awoke.

"Dromont! Dromont! Dix minutes d'arrête, messieurs."

Half blinded with the sudden light, I stumbled to the buffet, and asked for a cup of coffee, when three or four noisy young English tourists came hurrying in, surrounding a quiet imperturbable elderly commercial traveller. It was actually Levison again! They led him along in triumph, and called for champagne.

"Yes! yes!" the leader said. "You must have some, old fellow. We have won three games, you know, and you held such cards, too. Come along, look alive, you fellow with the nightcap—Cliquot—gilt top, you duffer. You shall have your revenge before we get to Lyons, old chap."

Levison chattered good humouredly about the last game, and took the wine. In a few minutes the young men had drunk their champagne, and had gone out to smoke. In another moment Levison caught my eye.

"Why, good gracious," he said, "who'd have thought of this! Well, I am glad to see you. Now, my dear sir, you must have some champagne with me. Here, another bottle, monsieur, if you please. I hope, long before we get to Lyons, to join you, my dear sir. I am tired of the noise of those youngsters. Besides, I object to high stakes, on principle."

The moment the waiter brought the champagne, Levison took the bottle.

"No," he said; "I never allow any one to open wine for me." He turned his back from me to remove the wire; removed it; and was filling my glass; when up dashed a burly hearty man to shake hands with me—so awkward in his heartiness that he broke the champagne bottle. Not a drop of the wine was saved. It was the major—hot as usual, and in a tremendous bustle.

"By Jove, sir; dooced sorry. Let me order

another bottle. How are you, gentlemen? Lucky, indeed, to meet you both again. Julia's with the luggage. We can be very cozy together. More champagne here. What's bottle in French? Most shameful thing! Those French friends of Julia's were gone off to Biarritz, pretending to have forgotten that we were coming —after six weeks with us in London, too! Precious shabby, not to put too fine a point upon it. By Jove, sir, there's the bell. We'll all go in the same carriage. They will not bring that champagne."

Levison looked rather annoyed. "I shall not see you," he said, "for a station or two. I must join those boys, and let them give me my revenge. Cleared me out of twenty guineas! I have not been so imprudent since I was first on the road. Good-bye, Major Baxter—good-bye, Mr. Blamyre!"

I wondered how this respectable old fellow, who so keenly relished his game at whist, had got hold of my name; but I remembered in a moment that he must have seen the direction on my luggage.

Flashes of crimson and green lights, a shout from some pointsman, a glimpse of rows of poplars, and lines of suburban houses, and we once more plunged into the yielding darkness.

I found the major very droll and pleasant, but evidently ruled by his fussy, good-natured, managing, masculine wife. He was full of stories of bungalows, compounds, and the hills; in all of which narrations he was perpetually interrupted by Mrs. Baxter.

"By Jove, sir!" he said, "I wish I could sell out, and go into your line of business. I am almost sick of India—it deranges one's liver so infernally."

"Now, John, how can you go on so! You know you never had a day's illness in all your life, except that week when you smoked out a whole box of Captain Mason's cheroots."

"Well, I pulled through it, Julia," said the major, striking himself a tremendous blow on the chest; "but I've been an unlucky devil as to promotion—always bad luck in everything. If I bought a horse, it made a point of going lame next day; never went in a train but it broke down."

"Now don't, John; pray don't go on so," said Mrs. Baxter, "or I shall really be very angry. Such nonsense! You'll get your step in time. Be patient, like me, major; take things more quietly. I hope you put a direction on that hat-box of yours? Where is the sword-case? If it wasn't for me, major, you'd get to Suez with nothing but the coat on your back."

Just then, the train stopped at Charmont, and in tripped Levison, with his white mackintosh over his arm, and his bundle of umbrellas and sticks.

"No more sovereign points for me!" he said, producing a pack of cards. "But if you and the major and Mrs. Baxter would like a rubber—shilling points—I'm for you. Cut for partners."

We assented with pleasure. We cut for partners. I and Mrs. Baxter against the major and Levison. We won nearly every game. Levison played too cautiously, and the major laughed, talked, and always forgot what cards were out.

Still it killed the time; the red and black turned up, changed, and ran into remarkable sequences; and the major's flukes and extraordinary luck in holding (not in playing) cards amused us, we laughed at Levison's punctilious care, and at Mrs. Baxter's avarice for tricks, and were as pleasant a party as the dim lamp of a night-train ever shone on. I could think of little, nevertheless, but my precious boxes.

There we were rushing through France, seeing nothing, heeding nothing, and having as little to do with our means of transit as if we had been four Arabian princes, seated on a flying enchanted carpet.

The game gradually grew more intermittent, the conversation more incessant. Levison, stiff of neckcloth as ever, and imperturbable and punctilious as ever, became chatty. He grew communicative about his business.

"I have at last," he said, in his precise and measured voice, "after years of attention to the subject, discovered the great secret which the waterproofers have so long coveted; how to let out the heated air of the body, and yet at the same time to exclude the rain. On my return to London, I offer this secret to the Mackintosh firm for ten thousand pounds; if they refuse the offer, I at once open a shop in Paris, call the new fabric Magentosh, in honour of the emperor's great Italian victory, and sit down and quietly realise a cool million—that's my way!"

"That's the real business tone," said the major, admiringly.

"Ah, major," cried his wife, ever ready to improve a subject, "if you had only had a little of Mr. Levison's prudence and energy, then, indeed, you'd have been colonel of your regiment before this."

Mr. Levison then turned the conversation to the subject of locks.

"I always use the letter-lock myself," he said. "My two talismanic words are TURLURETTE and PAPAGAYO—two names I once heard in an old French farce—who could guess them? It would take the adroitest thief seven hours to decipher even one. You find letter-locks safe, sir?" (He turned to me.)

I replied dryly that I did, and asked what time our train was due at Lyons.

"We are due at Lyons at 4.30," said the major; "it is now five to four. I don't know how it is, but I have a sort of presentiment to-night of some break-down. I am always in for it. When I went tiger-hunting, it was always my elephant that the beast pinned. If some of us were ordered up to an unhealthy out-of-the-way fort, it was always my company. It may be superstitious, I own, but I feel we shall have a break-down before we get to Marseilles. How fast we're going! Only see how the carriage rocks!"

I unconsciously grew nervous, but I concealed it. Could the major be a rogue, planning some scheme against me? But no: his red

bluff face, and his clear good-natured guileless eyes, refuted the suspicion.

"Nonsense, be quiet, major; that's the way you always make a journey disagreeable," said his wife, arranging herself for sleep. Then Levison began talking about his early life, and how, in George the Fourth's time, he was travelling for a cravat house in Bond-street. He grew eloquent in favour of the old costume.

"Low Radical fellows," he said, "run down the first gentleman in Europe, as he was justly called. I respect his memory. He was a wit, and the friend of wits; he was lavishly generous, and disdained poor pitiful economy. He dressed well, sir; he looked well, sir; he was a gentleman of perfect manners. Sir, this is a slovenly and shabby age. When I was young, no gentleman ever travelled without at least two dozen cravats, four whalebone stiffeners, and an iron to smooth the tie, and produce a thin equal edge to the muslin. There were no less, sir, than eighteen modes of putting on the cravat; there was the cravate à la Diane, the cravate à l'Anglaise, the cravate au nœud Gordien, the cravate——"

The train jolted, moved on, slackened, stopped.

The major thrust his head out of window, and shouted to a passing guard:

"Where are we?"

"Twenty miles from Lyons—Fort Rouge, monsieur."

"What is the matter? Anything the matter?"

An English voice answered from the next window:

"A wheel broken, they tell us. We shall have to wait two hours, and transfer the luggage."

"Good Heaven!" I could not help exclaiming.

Levison put his head out of window. "It is but too true," he said, drawing it in again; "two hours' delay at least, the man says. Tiresome, very—but such things will happen on the road; take it coolly. We'll have some coffee and another rubber. We must each look to our own luggage; or, if Mr. Blamyre goes in and orders supper, I'll see to it all. But, good gracious, what is that shining out there by the station lamps? Hei, monsieur!" (to a passing gendarme whom the major had hailed), "what is going on at the station?"

"Monsieur," said the gendarme, saluting, "those are soldiers of the First Chasseurs; they happened to be at the station on their way to Châlons; the station-master has sent them to surround the luggage-van, and see to the transfer of the baggage. No passenger is to go near it, as there are government stores of value in the train."

Levison spat on the ground and muttered execrations to himself:—I supposed at French railways.

"By Jove, sir, did you ever see such clumsy carts?" said Major Baxter, pointing to two country carts, each with four strong horses, that were drawn up under a hedge close to the station; for we had struggled on as far as the first turn-table, some hundred yards from the first houses of the village of Fort Rouge.

Levison and I tried very hard to get near our luggage, but the soldiers sternly refused our approach. It gave me some comfort, however, to see my chests transferred carefully, with many curses on their weight. I saw no sign of government stores, and I told the major so.

"Oh, they're sharp," he replied, "dooced sharp. Maybe the empress's jewels—one little package only, perhaps; but still not difficult to steal in a night confusion."

Just then there was a shrill piercing whistle, as if a signal. The horses in the two carts tore into a gallop, and flew out of sight.

"Savages, sir; mere barbarians still," exclaimed the major; "unable to use railways even now we've given them to them."

"Major!" said his wife, in a voice of awful reproof, "spare the feelings of these foreigners, and remember your position as an officer and a gentleman."

The major rubbed his hands, and laughed uproariously.

"A pack of infernal idiots," cried Levison; "they can do nothing without soldiers; soldiers here, soldiers there, soldiers everywhere."

"Well, these precautions are sometimes useful, sir," said Mrs. B.; "France is a place full of queer characters. The gentleman next you any day at a table d'hôte may be a returned convict. Major, you remember that case at Cairo three years ago?"

"Cairo, Julia my dear, is not in France."

"I know that, major, I hope. But the house was a French hotel, and that's the same thing." Mrs. B. spoke sharply.

"I shall have a nap, gentlemen. For my part, I'm tired," said the major, as we took our places in the Marseilles train, after three hours' tedious delay. "The next thing will be the boat breaking down, I suppose."

"Major, you wicked man, don't fly out against Providence," said his wife.

Levison grew eloquent again about the Prince Regent, his diamond epaulettes, and his inimitable cravats; but Levison's words seemed to lengthen, and gradually became inaudible to me, until I heard only a soothing murmur, and the rattle and jar of the wheels.

Again my dreams were nervous and uneasy. I imagined I was in Cairo, threading narrow dim streets, where the camels jostled me and the black slaves threatened me, and the air was heavy with musk, and veiled faces watched me from latticed casements above. Suddenly a rose fell at my feet. I looked up, and a face like my Minnie's, only with large liquid dark eyes like an antelope's, glanced forth from behind a watervase and smiled. At that moment, four Mamelukes appeared, riding down the street at full gallop, and came upon me with their sabres flashing. I dreamed I had only one hope, and that was to repeat the talismanic words of my letter-locks. Already I was under the hoofs of the Mamelukes' horses. I cried out with great difficulty, "Coto-

paxo! Cotopaxo!" A rough shake awoke me. It was the major, looking bluff but stern.

"Why, you're talking in your sleep!" he said; "why the devil do you talk in your sleep? Bad habit. Here we are at the breakfast-place."

"What was I talking about?" I asked, with ill-concealed alarm.

"Some foreign gibberish," returned the major.

"Greek, I think," said Levison; "but I was just off too."

We reached Marseilles. I rejoiced to see its almond-trees and its white villas. I should feel safer when I was on board ship, and my treasure with me. I was not of a suspicious temperament, but I had thought it remarkable that during that long journey from Lyons to the seaboard, I had never fallen asleep without waking and finding an eye upon me—either the major's or his wife's. Levison had slept during the last four hours incessantly. Latterly, we had all of us grown silent, and even rather sullen. Now we brightened up.

"Hôtel de Londres! Hôtel de l'Univers! Hôtel Impérial!" cried the touts, as we stood round our luggage, agreeing to keep together.

"Hôtel Impérial, of course," said the major; "best house."

A one-eyed saturnine half-caste tout shrunk up to us.

"Hôtel Impérial, sare. I am Hôtel Impérial; all full; not a bed; no—pas de tout—no use, sare!"

"Hang it! the steamer will be the next thing to fail."

"Steamer, sare—accident with boiler; won't start till minuit et vingt minutes—half-past midnight, sare."

"Where shall we go?" said I, turning round and smiling at the three blank faces of my companions. "Our journey seems doomed to be unlucky. Let us redeem it by a parting supper. My telegraphing done, I am free till half-past eleven."

"I will take you," said Levison, "to a small but very decent hotel down by the harbour. The Hôtel des Etrangers."

"Cursed low nasty crib—gambling place!" said the major, lighting a cheroot, as he got into an open fly.

Mr. Levison drew himself up in his punctilious way. "Sir," he said, "the place is in new hands, or I would not have recommended the house, you may rely upon it."

"Sir," said the major, lifting his broad-brimmed white hat, "I offer you my apologies. I was not aware of that."

"My dear sir, never mention the affair again."

"Major, you're a hot-headed simpleton," were Mrs. B.'s last words, as we drove off together.

As we entered a bare-looking salon with a dinner-table in the middle and a dingy billiard-table at one end, the major said to me, "I shall go and wash and dress for the theatre, and then take a stroll while you do your telegraphing. Go up first, Julia, and see the rooms."

"What slaves we poor women are!" said Mrs. B., as she sailed out.

"And I," said Levison, laying down his railway rug, "shall go out and try and do some business before the shops shut. We have agents here in the Canabière."

"Only two double-bedded rooms, sare," said the one-eyed tout, who stood over the luggage.

"That will do," said Levison, promptly, and with natural irritation at our annoyances. "My friend goes by the boat to-night; he does not sleep here. His luggage can be put in my room, and he can take the key, in case he comes in first."

"Then now we are all right," said the major. "So far, so good!"

When I got to the telegraph-office, I found a telegram from London awaiting me. To my surprise and horror, it contained only these words:

"You are in great danger. Do not wait a moment on shore. There is a plot against you. Apply to the prefect for a guard."

It must be the major, and I was in his hands! That rough hearty manner of his was all a trick. Even now, he might be carrying off the chests. I telegraphed back:

"Safe at Marseilles. All right up to this."

Thinking of the utter ruin of our house if I were robbed, and of dear Minnie, I flew back to the hotel, which was situated in a dirty narrow street near the harbour. As I turned down the street, a man darted from a doorway and seized my arm. It was one of the waiters. He said hurriedly, in French: "Quick, quick, monsieur; Major Baxter is anxious to see you, instantly, in the salon. There is no time to lose."

I ran to the hotel, and darted into the salon. There was the major pacing up and down in extraordinary excitement; his wife was looking anxiously out of window. The manner of both was entirely changed. The major ran up and seized me by the hand. "I am a detective officer, and my name is Arnott," he said. "That man Levison is a notorious thief. He is at this moment in his room, opening one of your specie chests. You must help me to nab him. I knew his little game, and have check-mated him. But I wanted to catch him in the act. Julia, finish that brandy-and-water while Mr. Blamyre and myself transact our business. Have you got a revolver, Mr. Blamyre, in case he shows fight? I prefer this." (He pulled out a staff.)

"I have left my revolver in the bedroom," I breathlessly exclaimed.

"That's bad; never mind, he is not likely to hit us in the flurry. He may not even think of it. You must rush at the door at the same moment as I do. These foreign locks are never any good. It's No. 15. Gently!"

We came to the door. We listened a moment. We could hear the sound of money chinking in a bag. Then a low dry laugh, as Levison chuckled over the word he had heard me utter in my sleep. "Cotopaxo—ha! ha!"

The major gave the word, and we both rushed at the door. It shook, splintered, was driven in. Levison, revolver in hand, stood over the open

box, ankle deep in gold. He had already filled a huge digger's belt that was round his waist, and a courier's bag that hung at his side. A carpet-bag, half full, lay at his feet, and, as he let it fall to open the window bolt, it gushed forth a perfect torrent of gold. He did not utter a word. There were ropes at the window, as if he had been lowering, or preparing to lower, bags into the side alley. He gave a whistle, and some vehicle could be heard to drive furiously off.

"Surrender, you gallows-bird! I know you," cried the major. "Surrender! I've got you now, old boy."

Levison's only reply was to pull the trigger of the revolver; fortunately, there was no discharge. I had forgotten to cap it.

"The infernal thing is not capped. One for you, Bobby," he said quietly. Then hurling it at the major with a sudden fury, he threw open the window and leaped out.

I leaped after him—it was a ground floor room—raising a hue and cry. Arnott remained to guard the money.

A moment more and a wild rabble of soldiers, sailors, mongrel idlers, and porters, were pursuing the flying wretch with screams and hoots, as in the dim light (the lamps were just beginning to be kindled) we tore after him, doubling and twisting like a hare, among the obstacles that crowded the quay. Hundreds of blows were aimed at him; hundreds of hands were stretched to seize him; he wrested himself from one; he felled another; he leaped over a third; a Zouave's clutch was all but on him, when suddenly his foot caught in a mooring ring, and he fell headlong into the harbour. There was a shout as he splashed and disappeared in the dark water, near which the light of only one lamp moved and glittered. I ran down the nearest steps and waited while the gendarmes took a boat and stolidly dragged with hooks for the body.

"They are foxes, these old thieves. I remember this man here at Toulon. I saw him branded. I knew his face again in a moment. He has dived under the shipping, got into some barge and hid. You'll never see him again," said an old grey gendarme who had taken me into the boat.

"Yes we shall, for here he is!" cried a second, stooping down and lifting a body out of the water by the hair.

"Oh, he *was* an artful file," said a man from a boat behind us. It was Arnott. "Just came to see how you were getting on, sir. It's all right with the money; Julia's minding it. I often said that fellow would catch it some day, now he's got it. He all but had you, Mr. Blamyre. He'd have cut your throat when you were asleep, rather than miss the money. But I was on his track. He didn't know me. This was my first cruise for some time against this sort of rogue. Well; his name is off the books; that's one good thing. Come, comrades, bring that body to land. We must strip him of the money he has upon him, which at least did one good thing while in his possession—it sent the scoundrel to the bottom."

Even in death, the long face looked craftily respectable when we turned it to the lamp-light.

Arnott told me all, in his jovial way, on my return to the hotel, where I loaded him and Mrs. B. (another officer) with thanks. On the night I started, he had received orders from the London head office to follow me, and watch Levison. He had not had time to communicate with my partners. The driver of our train had been bribed to make the engine break down at Fort Rouge, where Levison's accomplices were waiting with carts to carry off the luggage in the confusion and darkness, or even during a sham riot and fight. This plan Arnott had frustrated by getting the police to telegraph from Paris, for soldiers to be sent from Lyons, and be kept in readiness, at the station. The champagne he spilt had been drugged. Levison, defeated in his first attempt, had then resolved to try other means. My unlucky disclosure of the mystery of the letter-lock had furnished him with the power of opening that one chest. The break-down of the steamer, which was accidental (as far as could ever be ascertained), gave him a last opportunity.

That night, thanks to Arnott, I left Marseilles with not one single piece of money lost. The journey was prosperous. The loan was effected on very profitable terms. Our house has flourished ever since, and Minnie and I have flourished likewise—and increased.

VI.

TO BE TAKEN WITH A GRAIN OF SALT.

I have always noticed a prevalent want of courage, even among persons of superior intelligence and culture, as to imparting their own psychological experiences when those have been of a strange sort. Almost all men are afraid that what they could relate in such wise would find no parallel or response in a listener's internal life, and might be suspected or laughed at. A truthful traveller who should have seen some extraordinary creature in the likeness of a sea-serpent, would have no fear of mentioning it; but the same traveller having had some singular presentiment, impulse, vagary of thought, vision (so-called), dream, or other remarkable mental impression, would hesitate considerably before he would own to it. To this reticence I attribute much of the obscurity in which such subjects are involved. We do not habitually communicate our experiences of these subjective things, as we do our experiences of objective creation. The consequence is, that the general stock of experience in this regard appears exceptional, and really is so, in respect of being miserably imperfect.

In what I am going to relate I have no intention of setting up, opposing, or supporting, any theory whatever. I know the history of the Bookseller of Berlin, I have studied the case of the wife of a late Astronomer Royal as

related by Sir David Brewster, and I have followed the minutest details of a much more remarkable case of Spectral Illusion occurring within my private circle of friends. It may be necessary to state as to this last that the sufferer (a lady) was in no degree, however distant, related to me. A mistaken assumption on that head, might suggest an explanation of a part of my own case—but only a part—which would be wholly without foundation. It cannot be referred to my inheritance of any developed peculiarity, nor had I ever before any at all similar experience, nor have I ever had any at all similar experience since.

It does not signify how many years ago, or how few, a certain Murder was committed in England, which attracted great attention. We hear more than enough of Murderers as they rise in succession to their atrocious eminence, and I would bury the memory of this particular brute, if I could, as his body was buried, in Newgate Jail. I purposely abstain from giving any direct clue to the criminal's individuality.

When the murder was first discovered, no suspicion fell—or I ought rather to say, for I cannot be too precise in my facts, it was nowhere publicly hinted that any suspicion fell—on the man who was afterwards brought to trial. As no reference was at that time made to him in the newspapers, it is obviously impossible that any description of him can at that time have been given in the newspapers. It is essential that this fact be remembered.

Unfolding at breakfast my morning paper, containing the account of that first discovery, I found it to be deeply interesting, and I read it with close attention. I read it twice, if not three times. The discovery had been made in a bedroom, and, when I laid down the paper, I was aware of a flash—rush—flow—I do not know what to call it—no word I can find is satisfactorily descriptive—in which I seemed to see that bedroom passing through my room, like a picture impossibly painted on a running river. Though almost instantaneous in its passing, it was perfectly clear; so clear that I distinctly, and with a sense of relief, observed the absence of the dead body from the bed.

It was in no romantic place that I had this curious sensation, but in chambers in Piccadilly, very near to the corner of Saint James's-street. It was entirely new to me. I was in my easy-chair at the moment, and the sensation was accompanied with a peculiar shiver which started the chair from its position. (But it is to be noted that the chair ran easily on castors.) I went to one of the windows (there are two in the room, and the room is on the second floor) to refresh my eyes with the moving objects down in Piccadilly. It was a bright autumn morning, and the street was sparkling and cheerful. The wind was high. As I looked out, it brought down from the Park a quantity of fallen leaves, which a gust took, and whirled into a spiral pillar. As the pillar fell and the leaves dispersed, I saw two men on the opposite side of the way, going from West to East. They were one behind the other. The foremost man often looked back over his shoulder. The second man followed him, at a distance of some thirty paces, with his right hand menacingly raised. First, the singularity and steadiness of this threatening gesture in so public a thoroughfare, attracted my attention; and next, the more remarkable circumstance that nobody heeded it. Both men threaded their way among the other passengers, with a smoothness hardly consistent even with the action of walking on a pavement, and no single creature that I could see, gave them place, touched them, or looked after them. In passing before my windows, they both stared up at me. I saw their two faces very distinctly, and I knew that I could recognise them anywhere. Not that I had consciously noticed anything very remarkable in either face, except that the man who went first had an unusually lowering appearance, and that the face of the man who followed him was of the colour of impure wax.

I am a bachelor, and my valet and his wife constitute my whole establishment. My occupation is in a certain Branch Bank, and I wish that my duties as head of a Department were as light as they are popularly supposed to be. They kept me in town that autumn, when I stood in need of change. I was not ill, but I was not well. My reader is to make the most that can be reasonably made of my feeling jaded, having a depressing sense upon me of a monotonous life, and being "slightly dyspeptic." I am assured by my renowned doctor that my real state of health at that time justifies no stronger description, and I quote his own from his written answer to my request for it.

As the circumstances of the Murder, gradually unravelling, took stronger and stronger possession of the public mind, I kept them away from mine, by knowing as little about them as was possible in the midst of the universal excitement. But I knew that a verdict of Wilful Murder had been found against the suspected Murderer, and that he had been committed to Newgate for trial. I also knew that his trial had been postponed over one Sessions of the Central Criminal Court, on the ground of general prejudice and want of time for the preparation of the defence. I may further have known, but I believe I did not, when, or about when, the Sessions to which his trial stood postponed would come on.

My sitting-room, bedroom, and dressing-room, are all on one floor. With the last, there is no communication but through the bedroom. True, there is a door in it, once communicating with the staircase; but a part of the fitting of my bath has been—and had then been for some years—fixed across it. At the same period, and as a part of the same arrangement, the door had been nailed up and canvased over.

I was standing in my bedroom late one night, giving some directions to my servant before he went to bed. My face was towards the only available door of communication with the dressing-room, and it was closed. My servant's back was towards that door. While I was speaking to him I saw it open, and a man look in, who

very earnestly and mysteriously beckoned to me. That man was the man who had gone second of the two along Piccadilly, and whose face was of the colour of impure wax.

The figure, having beckoned, drew back and closed the door. With no longer pause than was made by my crossing the bedroom, I opened the dressing-room door, and looked in. I had a lighted candle already in my hand. I felt no inward expectation of seeing the figure in the dressing-room, and I did not see it there.

Conscious that my servant stood amazed, I turned round to him, and said: "Derrick, could you believe that in my cool senses I fancied I saw a——" As I there laid my hand upon his breast, with a sudden start he trembled violently, and said, "O Lord yes, sir! A dead man beckoning!"

Now, I do not believe that this John Derrick, my trusty and attached servant for more than twenty years, had any impression whatever of having seen any such figure, until I touched him. The change in him was so startling when I touched him, that I fully believe he derived his impression in some occult manner from me at that instant.

I bade John Derrick bring some brandy, and I gave him a dram, and was glad to take one myself. Of what had preceded that night's phenomenon, I told him not a single word. Reflecting on it, I was absolutely certain that I had never seen that face before, except on the one occasion in Piccadilly. Comparing its expression when beckoning at the door, with its expression when it had stared up at me as I stood at my window, I came to the conclusion that on the first occasion it had sought to fasten itself upon my memory, and that on the second occasion it had made sure of being immediately remembered.

I was not very comfortable that night, though I felt a certainty, difficult to explain, that the figure would not return. At daylight, I fell into a heavy sleep, from which I was awakened by John Derrick's coming to my bedside with a paper in his hand.

This paper, it appeared, had been the subject of an altercation at the door between its bearer and my servant. It was a summons to me to serve upon a Jury at the forthcoming Sessions of the Central Criminal Court at the Old Bailey. I had never before been summoned on such a Jury, as John Derrick well knew. He believed —I am not certain at this hour whether with reason or otherwise—that that class of Jurors were customarily chosen on a lower qualification than mine, and he had at first refused to accept the summons. The man who served it had taken the matter very coolly. He had said that my attendance or non-attendance was nothing to him; there the summons was; and I should deal with it at my own peril, and not at his.

For a day or two I was undecided whether to respond to this call, or take no notice of it. I was not conscious of the slightest mysterious bias, influence, or attraction, one way or other. Of that I am as strictly sure as of every other statement that I make here. Ultimately I decided, as a break in the monotony of my life, that I would go.

The appointed morning was a raw morning in the month of November. There was a dense brown fog in Piccadilly, and it became positively black and in the last degree oppressive East of Temple Bar. I found the passages and staircases of the Court House flaringly lighted with gas, and the Court itself similarly illuminated. I *think* that until I was conducted by officers into the Old Court and saw its crowded state, I did not know that the Murderer was to be tried that day. I *think* that until I was so helped into the Old Court with considerable difficulty, I did not know into which of the two Courts sitting, my summons would take me. But this must not be received as a positive assertion, for I am not completely satisfied in my mind on either point.

I took my seat in the place appropriated to Jurors in waiting, and I looked about the Court as well as I could through the cloud of fog and breath that was heavy in it. I noticed the black vapour hanging like a murky curtain outside the great windows, and I noticed the stifled sound of wheels on the straw or tan that was littered in the street; also, the hum of the people gathered there, which a shrill whistle, or a louder song or hail than the rest, occasionally pierced. Soon afterwards the Judges, two in number, entered and took their seats. The buzz in the Court was awfully hushed. The direction was given to put the Murderer to the bar. He appeared there. And in that same instant I recognised in him, the first of the two men who had gone down Piccadilly.

If my name had been called then, I doubt if I could have answered to it audibly. But it was called about sixth or eighth in the panel, and I was by that time able to say "Here!" Now, observe. As I stepped into the box, the prisoner, who had been looking on attentively but with no sign of concern, became violently agitated, and beckoned to his attorney. The prisoner's wish to challenge me was so manifest, that it occasioned a pause, during which the attorney, with his hand upon the dock, whispered with his client, and shook his head. I afterwards had it from that gentleman, that the prisoner's first affrighted words to him were, "*At all hazards challenge that man!*" But, that as he would give no reason for it, and admitted that he had not even known my name until he heard it called and I appeared, it was not done.

Both on the ground already explained, that I wish to avoid reviving the unwholesome memory of that Murderer, and also because a detailed account of his long trial is by no means indispensable to my narrative, I shall confine myself closely to such incidents in the ten days and nights during which we, the Jury, were kept together, as directly bear on my own curious personal experience. It is in that, and not in the Murderer, that I seek to interest my reader. It is to that, and not to a page of the Newgate Calendar, that I beg attention.

I was chosen Foreman of the Jury. On the second morning of the trial, after evidence had been taken for two hours (I heard the church clocks strike), happening to cast my eyes over my brother-jurymen, I found an inexplicable difficulty in counting them. I counted them several times, yet always with the same difficulty. In short, I made them one too many.

I touched the brother-juryman whose place was next me, and I whispered to him, "Oblige me by counting us." He looked surprised by the request, but turned his head and counted. "Why," says he, suddenly, "we are Thirt——; but no, it's not possible. No. We are twelve."

According to my counting that day, we were always right in detail, but in the gross we were always one too many. There was no appearance—no figure—to account for it; but I had now an inward foreshadowing of the figure that was surely coming.

The Jury were housed at the London Tavern. We all slept in one large room on separate tables, and we were constantly in the charge and under the eye of the officer sworn to hold us in safe-keeping. I see no reason for suppressing the real name of that officer. He was intelligent, highly polite, and obliging, and (I was glad to hear) much respected in the City. He had an agreeable presence, good eyes, enviable black whiskers, and a fine sonorous voice. His name was Mr. Harker.

When we turned into our twelve beds at night, Mr. Harker's bed was drawn across the door. On the night of the second day, not being disposed to lie down, and seeing Mr. Harker sitting on his bed, I went and sat beside him, and offered him a pinch of snuff. As Mr. Harker's hand touched mine in taking it from my box, a peculiar shiver crossed him, and he said: "Who is this!"

Following Mr. Harker's eyes and looking along the room, I saw again the figure I expected—the second of the two men who had gone down Piccadilly. I rose, and advanced a few steps; then stopped, and looked round at Mr. Harker. He was quite unconcerned, laughed, and said in a pleasant way, "I thought for a moment we had a thirteenth juryman, without a bed. But I see it is the moonlight."

Making no revelation to Mr. Harker, but inviting him to take a walk with me to the end of the room, I watched what the figure did. It stood for a few moments by the bedside of each of my eleven brother-jurymen, close to the pillow. It always went to the right-hand side of the bed, and always passed out crossing the foot of the next bed. It seemed from the action of the head, merely to look down pensively at each recumbent figure. It took no notice of me, or of my bed, which was that nearest to Mr. Harker's. It seemed to go out where the moonlight came in, through a high window, as by an aërial flight of stairs.

Next morning at breakfast, it appeared that everybody present had dreamed of the murdered man last night, except myself and Mr. Harker.

I now felt as convinced that the second man who had gone down Piccadilly was the murdered man (so to speak), as if it had been borne into my comprehension by his immediate testimony. But even this took place, and in a manner for which I was not at all prepared.

On the fifth day of the trial, when the case for the prosecution was drawing to a close, a miniature of the murdered man, missing from his bedroom upon the discovery of the deed, and afterwards found in a hiding-place where the Murderer had been seen digging, was put in evidence. Having been identified by the witness under examination, it was handed up to the Bench, and thence handed down to be inspected by the Jury. As an officer in a black gown was making his way with it across to me, the figure of the second man who had gone down Piccadilly, impetuously started from the crowd, caught the miniature from the officer, and gave it to me with its own hands, at the same time saying in a low and hollow tone—before I saw the miniature, which was in a locket—"*I was younger then, and my face was not then drained of blood.*" It also came between me and the brother juryman to whom I would have given the miniature, and between him and the brother juryman to whom he would have given it, and so passed it on through the whole of our number, and back into my possession. Not one of them, however, detected this.

At table, and generally when we were shut up together in Mr. Harker's custody, we had from the first naturally discussed the day's proceedings a good deal. On that fifth day, the case for the prosecution being closed, and we having that side of the question in a completed shape before us, our discussion was more animated and serious. Among our number was a vestryman—the densest idiot I have ever seen at large—who met the plainest evidence with the most preposterous objections, and who was sided with by two flabby parochial parasites; all the three empanelled from a district so delivered over to Fever that they ought to have been upon their own trial, for five hundred Murders. When these mischievous blockheads were at their loudest, which was towards midnight while some of us were already preparing for bed, I again saw the murdered man. He stood grimly behind them, beckoning to me. On my going towards them and striking into the conversation, he immediately retired. This was the beginning of a separate series of appearances, confined to that long room in which *we* were confined. Whenever a knot of my brother jurymen laid their heads together, I saw the head of the murdered man among theirs. Whenever their comparison of notes was going against him, he would solemnly and irresistibly beckon to me.

It will be borne in mind that down to the production of the miniature on the fifth day of the trial, I had never seen the Appearance in Court. Three changes occurred, now that we entered on the case for the defence. Two of them I will mention together, first. The figure was now in Court continually, and it never there

addressed itself to me, but always to the person who was speaking at the time. For instance. The throat of the murdered man had been cut straight across. In the opening speech for the defence, it was suggested that the deceased might have cut his own throat. At that very moment, the figure with its throat in the dreadful condition referred to (this it had concealed before) stood at the speaker's elbow, motioning across and across its windpipe, now with the right hand, now with the left, vigorously suggesting to the speaker himself, the impossibility of such a wound having been self-inflicted by either hand. For another instance. A witness to character, a woman, deposed to the prisoner's being the most amiable of mankind. The figure at that instant stood on the floor before her, looking her full in the face, and pointing out the prisoner's evil countenance with an extended arm and an outstretched finger.

The third change now to be added, impressed me strongly, as the most marked and striking of all. I do not theorise upon it; I accurately state it, and there leave it. Although the Appearance was not itself perceived by those whom it addressed, its coming close to such persons was invariably attended by some trepidation or disturbance on their part. It seemed to me as if it were prevented by laws to which I was not amenable, from fully revealing itself to others, and yet as if it could, invisibly, dumbly and darkly, overshadow their minds. When the leading counsel for the defence suggested that hypothesis of suicide and the figure stood at the learned gentleman's elbow, frightfully sawing at its severed throat, it is undeniable that the counsel faltered in his speech, lost for a few seconds the thread of his ingenious discourse, wiped his forehead with his handkerchief, and turned extremely pale. When the witness to character was confronted by the Appearance, her eyes most certainly did follow the direction of its pointed finger, and rest in great hesitation and trouble upon the prisoner's face. Two additional illustrations will suffice. On the eighth day of the trial, after the pause which was every day made early in the afternoon for a few minutes' rest and refreshment, I came back into Court with the rest of the Jury, some little time before the return of the Judges. Standing up in the box and looking about me, I thought the figure was not there, until, chancing to raise my eyes to the gallery, I saw it bending forward and leaning over a very decent woman, as if to assure itself whether the Judges had resumed their seats or not. Immediately afterwards, that woman screamed, fainted, and was carried out. So with the venerable, sagacious, and patient Judge who conducted the trial. When the case was over, and he settled himself and his papers to sum up, the murdered man entering by the Judges' door, advanced to his Lordship's desk, and looked eagerly over his shoulder at the pages of his notes which he was turning. A change came over his Lordship's face; his hand stopped; the peculiar shiver that I knew so well, passed over him; he faltered, "Excuse me, gentlemen, for a few moments. I am somewhat oppressed by the vitiated air;" and did not recover until he had drunk a glass of water.

Through all the monotony of six of those interminable ten days—the same Judges and others on the bench, the same Murderer in the dock, the same lawyers at the table, the same tones of question and answer rising to the roof of the court, the same scratching of the Judge's pen, the same ushers going in and out, the same lights kindled at the same hour when there had been any natural light of day, the same foggy curtain outside the great windows when it was foggy, the same rain pattering and dripping when it was rainy, the same footmarks of turnkeys and prisoner day after day on the same sawdust, the same keys locking and unlocking the same heavy doors—through all the wearisome monotony which made me feel as if I had been Foreman of the Jury for a vast period of time, and Piccadilly had flourished coevally with Babylon, the murdered man never lost one trace of his distinctness in my eyes, nor was he at any moment less distinct than anybody else. I must not omit, as a matter of fact, that I never once saw the Appearance which I call by the name of the murdered man, look at the Murderer. Again and again I wondered, "Why does he not?" But he never did.

Nor did he look at me, after the production of the miniature, until the last closing minutes of the trial arrived. We retired to consider, at seven minutes before ten at night. The idiotic vestryman and his two parochial parasites gave us so much trouble, that we twice returned into Court, to beg to have certain extracts from the Judge's notes re-read. Nine of us had not the smallest doubt about those passages, neither, I believe, had any one in Court; the dunderheaded triumvirate however, having no idea but obstruction, disputed them for that very reason. At length we prevailed, and finally the Jury returned into Court at ten minutes past twelve.

The murdered man at that time stood directly opposite the Jury-box, on the other side of the Court. As I took my place, his eyes rested on me, with great attention; he seemed satisfied, and slowly shook a great grey veil, which he carried on his arm for the first time, over his head and whole form. As I gave in our verdict "Guilty," the veil collapsed, all was gone, and his place was empty.

The Murderer being asked by the Judge, according to usage, whether he had anything to say before sentence of Death should be passed upon him, indistinctly muttered something which was described in the leading newspapers of the following day as "a few rambling, incoherent, and half-audible words, in which he was understood to complain that he had not had a fair trial, because the Foreman of the Jury was prepossessed against him." The remarkable declaration that he really made, was this: "*My Lord, I knew I was a doomed man when the Foreman of my Jury came into the box. My Lord, I knew he would*

never let me off, because, before I was taken, he somehow got to my bedside in the night, woke me, and put a rope round my neck."

VII.

TO BE TAKEN AND TRIED.

There can hardly be seen anywhere, a prettier village than Cumner, standing on the brow of a hill which commands one of the finest views in England, and flanked by its broad breezy common, the air of which is notorious for clearness and salubrity. The high road from Dring, for the most part shut in by the fences of gentlemen's seats, opens out when it reaches this common, and, separating from the Tenelms road, ascends in a north-westerly direction till it comes in sight of Cumner. Every step is against the collar, yet so gradual is the ascent, that you scarcely realise it until, turning, you behold the magnificent panorama spread around and beneath.

The village consists chiefly of one short street of somewhat straggling houses, among which you observe its little post-office, its police station, its rustic public-house (the Dunstan Arms), whose landlord also holds the general shop across the way; and its two or three humble lodging-houses. Facing you as you enter the street, which is a cul-de-sac, is the quaint old church, standing not more than a bow-shot from the Rectory. There is something primitive and almost patriarchal in this quiet village, where the pastor lives surrounded by his flock, and can scarcely move from his own gate without finding himself in the midst of them.

Cumner Common is skirted on three sides by dwellings, varying in size and importance, from the small butcher's shop standing in its own garden, and under the shadow of its own apple-trees, to the pretty white house where the curate lodges, and the more pretentious abodes of those who are, or consider themselves, gentry. It is bounded on the east by the low stone wall and gateway of Mr. Malcolmson's domain; the modest dwelling of Simon Eade, that gentleman's bailiff, half covered with creepers, the autumnal hues of which might rival the brightest specimens of American foliage; lastly, by the high brick wall (with its door in the centre), which completely shuts in Mr. Gibbs's "place." On the south side runs the high road to Tenelms, skirting the great Southanger property, of which Sir Oswald Dunstan is proprietor.

Hardly could the pedestrian tourist, on his way from Dring, fail to pause at the rustic stile nearly opposite the blacksmith's forge, and, resting upon it, gaze down on the magnificent prospect of wood and water spread at his feet—a prospect to which two ancient cedars form no inappropriate foreground. That stile is not often crossed, for the footpath from it leads only to the farm called the Plashetts; but it is very constantly used as a resting-place. Many an artist has sketched the view from it; many a lover has whispered tender words to his mistress beside it; many a weary tramp has rested his or her feet on the worn stone beneath.

This stile was once the favourite resort of two young lovers, inhabitants of the district, and soon to be united. George Eade, the only son of Mr. Malcolmson's bailiff, was a stalwart good-looking young fellow of some six-and-twenty, who worked for that gentleman under his father, and was in the receipt of liberal wages. Honest, steady, and fond of self-cultivation, he was capable, if not clever—persevering, if not rapid—an excellent specimen of an honest English peasant. But he had certain peculiarities of disposition and temper, which served to render him considerably less popular than his father. He was reserved; feeling strongly, but with difficulty giving expression to his feelings; susceptible to, and not easily forgiving, injuries; singularly addicted to self-accusation and remorse. His father, a straightforward open-hearted man of five-and-forty, who had raised himself by sheer merit from the position of a labourer to that of the trusted manager of Mr. Malcolmson's property, was highly respected by that gentleman, and by the whole country-side. His mother, feeble in health, but energetic of spirit, was one of the most excellent of women.

This couple, like many of their class, had married imprudently early, and had struggled through many difficulties in consequence: burying, one after another, three sickly children in the little churchyard at Cumner where they hoped one day themselves to lie. On the one son that remained to them their affections were centred. The mother, especially, worshipped her George with an admiring love that partook of idolatry. She was not without some of the weaknesses of her sex. She was jealous; and when she discovered the flame which had been kindled in the heart of her son by the soft blue eyes of Susan Archer, her feelings towards that rosy-cheeked damsel were not those of perfect charity. True, the Archers were people who held themselves high, occupying a large farm under Sir Oswald Dunstan; and they were known to regard Susan's attachment as a decided lowering of herself and them. That attachment had sprung up, as is not unfrequently the case, in the hop-gardens. The girl had been ailing for some time, and her shrewd old doctor assured her father that there was no tonic so efficacious as a fortnight's hop-picking in the sunny September weather. Now there were but few places to which so distinguished a belle as Susan could be permitted to go for such a purpose; but her family knew and respected the Eades, and to Mr. Malcolmson's hop-grounds she was accordingly sent. The tonic prescribed produced the desired effect. She lost her ailments; but she lost her heart too.

George Eade was good looking, and up to that time had never cared for woman. The love he conceived for the gentle, blue-eyed girl was of that all-absorbing character which natures stern and concentrated like his, are fitted to feel, and to feel but once in a lifetime. It

carried all before it. Susan was sweet tempered and simple hearted, of a yielding disposition, and, though not unconscious of her beauty, singularly little spoilt by the consciousness. She gave her whole heart to the faithful earnest man whom she reverenced as her superior in moral strength, if not in outward circumstances. They exchanged no rings on the balmy evening which witnessed their plighted faith, but he took from her hat the garland of hops she had laughingly twisted round it, and looking down upon her sweet face with a great love in his brown eyes, whispered, "I shall keep this whilst I live, and have it buried with me when I die!"

But, there was a certain Geoffrey Gibbs, the owner of the "Place" on Cumner Common, who had paid, and was still paying, marked attention to the beautiful Susan. This man, originally in trade, had chanced, some years before, to see in the newspapers a notice that if he would apply to a certain lawyer in London, he would hear of something greatly to his advantage. He did so, and the result was, his acquisition of a comfortable independence, left him by a distant kinsman whom he had never so much as seen. This windfall changed his whole prospects and manner of life, but not his character, which had always been that of an unmitigated snob. In outward circumstances, however, he was a gentleman living on his income, and, as such, the undoubted social superior of the Archers, who were simply tenant-farmers. Hence their desire that Susan should favour his suit. Some people were of opinion, that he had no serious intention of marrying the girl; and Susan herself always encouraged this notion; adding, that were he ten times as rich, and a hundred times as devoted as he represented himself to be, she would die rather than accept the cross-grained monster.

He *was* frightful; less from defects of feature than from utter disproportion of form, and a sinister expression of countenance, far worse than actual ugliness. His legs were as short as his body and hands were long, while his head would have been well suited to the frame of a Hercules; giving him a top-heavy appearance that was singularly ungraceful. His eyebrows were shaggy and overhanging, his eyes small and malicious looking, his nose was beak-shaped, his mouth immense, with thick sensual lips. He wore huge false-looking chains, outrageous shirt-pins and neckcloths, and cutaway sporting coats of astounding colours. He was a man who delighted in frightening inoffensive females, in driving within an inch of a lady's pony-carriage, or in violently galloping past some timid girl on horseback, and chuckling at her scared attempts to restrain her plunging steed. Like all bullies, he was of course a coward at heart.

Between this man and George Eade a keen hatred existed. George despised as well as detested Gibbs. Gibbs envied as much as he abhorred the more fortunate peasant, who was beloved where he met with nothing but coldness and rebuffs.

Susan's heart was indeed wholly George's, yet it was only when her health had again begun to fail, that her father was frightened into a most unwilling consent to their union; which consent no sooner became known to Mr. Malcolmson, than he voluntarily raised the young man's wages, and undertook to put in repair for him a cottage of his own, not far from that of Simon Eade.

But, when the news of the approaching marriage reached the ears of Gibbs, his jealous fury was aroused to the utmost. He rushed down to the Plashetts, and, closeting himself with Mr. Archer, made brilliant offers of settlement on Susan, if she would consent even now to throw over her lover, and become his wife. But he only succeeded in distressing the girl, and tantalising her father. Willingly, indeed, would the latter have acceded to his wishes, but he had passed his solemn word to George, and Susan held him to it. No sooner, however, was Gibbs gone, than the old man burst into loud lamentations over what he called her self-sacrifice; and her eldest brother coming in, joined in reproaching her for refusing prospects so advantageous. Susan was weak, and easily influenced. She was cut to the heart by their cruel words, and went out to meet her lover with her spirits depressed, and her eyes red and swollen. George, shocked at her appearance, listened with indignation to her agitated recital of what had passed.

"Keep your carriage, indeed!" he exclaimed, with bitter scorn. "Does your father make more count of a one-horse shay than of true love such as mine? And a fellow like Gibbs, too! That I wouldn't trust a dog with!"

"Father don't see it so," the girl sobbed out. "Father says he'd make a very good husband, once we was married. And I'd be a lady, and dress fine, and have servants! Father thinks so much of that!"

"So it seems; but don't you be led by him, Susan, darling! 'Tisn't riches and fine clothes that makes folks' happiness—'tis better things! See here, my girl——" He stopped short, and faced her with a look of unutterable emotion. "I love ye so true, that if I thought—if I thought it'd be for your good to marry this fellow—if I thought ye'd be happier with him than with me, I'd—I'd give ye up, Susan! Yes—and never come near ye more! I would indeed!"

He paused, and, raising his hand with a gesture that had in it a rude solemnity very impressive, repeated once more, "*I would indeed!* But ye'd not be happy with Geoffrey Gibbs. Ye'd be miserable—ill-used, perhaps. He ain't a man to make any woman happy—I'm as sure o' that, as that I stand here. He's bad at heart—downright cruel. And I!—what I promise, I'll act up to—O! steady. I'll work for you, and slave for you, and—and love you true!"

He drew her towards him as he spoke, and she, reassured by his words, nestled lovingly to his side. And so they walked on for some moments in silence.

"And, darling," he added, presently, "I've that trust—that faith—in me—that once we're married, and you're mine—safe—so's no one can

come between us, I'll get on; and who knows but ye may ride in your carriage yet. Folks do get on, when they've a mind to, serious."

She looked up at him with fond admiring eyes. She honoured him for his strength, all the more because of her own weakness.

"I don't want no carriage," she murmured; "I want nothing but you, George. 'Tisn't I, you know, that wish things different—'tis father——"

The moon had risen, the beautiful bright September moon, nearly at the full; and its light shone on the lovers as they retraced their steps through the silent Southanger woods—how solemn and lovely at that hour!—towards Susan's home. And before they had reached the gate of the Plashetts, her sweet face was again bright with smiles, and it had been agreed between them that to avoid a repetition of such attempts on the part of Gibbs, and such scenes with her father, she should propose to go to her aunt's, Miss Jane Archer's, at Ormiston, for a fortnight of the three weeks that yet remained before the marriage should take place.

She acted on this idea, and George took advantage of her absence to attend a sale on the other side of the county, and procure certain articles of furniture required for their new home. Once away, he obtained leave to prolong his stay with a friend till the time of Susan's return. It was pleasanter for him not to be at home at this period. His mother seemed to grow more averse to his marriage, the nearer it approached; declaring that no good could possibly come of union with a girl who had been too much waited upon and flattered, to make a good wife for a plain hard-working man. These remarks, indescribably galling to the lover because not wholly without foundation, had given rise to more than one dispute between his mother and him, which had not tended to diminish the half-unconscious dislike the good woman felt towards her future daughter-in-law.

When George returned home after his fortnight's holiday, he found, instead of the expected letter from his betrothed announcing her arrival at the Plashetts, one addressed to him in a strange hand, and containing the following words:

"George Eade, you are being done. Look to G. G.

"A Well-wisher."

Perplexed at so mysterious a communication, he was somewhat annoyed to find that Gibbs had quitted Cumner from the very day after his own departure, and was still absent. This struck him as remarkable; but Susan had written him only a week before, a letter so full of tenderness that he could not bring himself to entertain a single doubt of her truth. But on the very next morning, his mother handed him a letter from Farmer Archer, enclosing one from his sister, informing him that her niece had left her house clandestinely two days before, to be married to Mr. Gibbs. It appeared that the girl had gone, as on previous occasions, to spend the day with a cousin, and that not returning at night, it was concluded she had settled to sleep there. The next morning had brought, instead of herself, the announcement of her marriage.

On reading this news, George was at first conscious of but one feeling. Utter incredulity. There must be some error somewhere; the thing could not be. While his father, with tears in his honest eyes, exhorted him to bear up like a man under this blow, and his mother indignantly declared that a girl who could so conduct herself was indeed a good riddance, he sat silent, half stupified. Such a breach of faith seemed, to his earnest and loyal nature, simply impossible.

Another half-hour brought confirmation that could not be doubted. James Wilkins, Mr. Gibbs's man-servant, came grinning and important, with a letter for George, which had been enclosed in one from his master to himself. It was from Susan, and signed with her new name.

"I know," it said, "that for what I have done, I shall be without excuse in your eyes—that you will hate and despise me as much as you have hitherto loved and trusted me. I know that I have behaved to you very, very bad, and I don't ask you to forgive me. I know you can't. But I do ask you to refrain from vengeance. It can't bring back the past. Oh, George! if ever you cared for me, listen to what I entreat now. Hate and despise me—I don't expect no other—but don't you revenge my ill conduct on anyone. Forget all about me—that's the best thing for both of us. It would have been better if we had never beheld one another."

Much more followed in the same strain—weak, self-accusing, fearful of consequences—wholly unworthy of George.

He gazed at the letter, holding it in those strong sinewy hands that would have toiled for her so hard and so faithfully. Then, without a word, he held it out to his father, and left the room. They heard him mount the narrow stairs, lock himself into his little garret, and they heard no more.

After a while his mother went to him. Although personally relieved at her son's release, that feeling was entirely absorbed in tender and loving pity for what she knew must be his sufferings. He was sitting by the little casement, a withered branch of hops upon his knee. She went and laid her cheek to his.

"Have patience, lad!" she said, with earnest feeling. "Try—try—to have faith, and comfort'll be sent ye in time. It's hard to bear, I know—dreadful hard and bitter—but for the poor parents' sakes who loves ye so dear, try and bear it."

He looked up at her with cold tearless eyes. "I will," he said, in a hard voice. "Don't ye see I *am* trying?"

His glance was dull and hopeless. How she longed that tears would come and relieve his bursting heart!

"She wasn't worthy of ye, my boy. I always told ye——"

But he stopped her with a stern gesture.

"Mother! Not a word o' that, nor of her, from this hour. What she's done ain't so

very bad after all. *I'm* all right—*I* am. Father and you shan't see no difference in me, leastways, not if you'll forbear naming of her ever, ever again. She's turned my heart to stone, that's all! No great matter!"

He laid his hand on his broad chest and heaved a great gasping sigh. "This morning I had a heart o' flesh here," he said; "now it's a cold, heavy stone. But it's no great matter."

"Oh, don't ye speak like that, my lad!" his mother cried, bursting into tears, and throwing her arms around him. "It kills me to hear ye!"

But he gently unwound those arms, and kissing her on the cheek, led her to the door. "I must go to work now," he said; and, descending the stairs before her, he quitted the cottage with a firm step.

From that hour no one heard him speak of Susan Gibbs. He never inquired into the circumstances of her stay at Ormiston; he never spoke of them, nor of her, to her relations or to his own. He avoided the former; he was silent and reserved with the latter. Susan appeared to be, for him, as though she had never been.

And from that hour he was an altered being. He went about his work as actively, and did it as carefully, as ever; but it was done sternly, doggedly, like an imperative but unwelcome duty. No man ever saw a smile upon his lips; no jocular word ever escaped them. Grave and uncompromising, he went his ungenial way, seeking for no sympathy, and bestowing none, avoiding all companionship save that of his parents;—a sad and solitary man.

Meanwhile, Mr. Gibbs's "Place" on Cumner Common was advertised as to be let; strangers hired it, and for nearly three years nothing was seen of him or of his wife. Then news arrived one day that they were to be expected shortly, and quite a ferment of expectation was created in the little village. They came, and certain rumours that had reached it from time to time were found to have only too much foundation in truth.

For it had oozed out, as such things do ooze, that Gibbs shamefully ill used his pretty wife, and that the marriage, which on his side had been one of love, had turned out miserably. Her father and brothers, who had been to see them more than once, had been strangely reserved on the subject of those visits, and it was generally understood that the old farmer lamented his daughter's marriage now, as much as he had formerly longed for it. No one wondered, when they saw her. She was the shadow of her former self; still lovely, but broken, cowed, pale; all the bloom faded; all the spirit crushed out of her. No smile was ever seen upon those pretty lips now, except when she played with her boy, a fair-haired little fellow, the image of herself. But even in her intercourse with this child she was sternly restricted, and her tyrant would not unfrequently dismiss him with an oath, and forbid her to follow him to his nursery.

In spite of their being such near neighbours, the Gibbses had been some time in the place before George met his former love. He never went to Cumner church (nor to anv, indeed), and she never quitted her own house, except to drive with her husband, or walk through the Southanger Woods to her father's. George might have beheld her driving past his father's door with a high-stepping horse that always seemed on the point of running away; but he never looked at her, nor replied to his mother's remarks respecting her and her smart turn-out. Yet though he resolutely kept the door of his own lips, he could not close the lips of other people, or his own ears. Do what he would, the Gibbses and their doings pursued him still. His master's labourers gossiped about the husband's brutality; the baker's boy had no end of stories to tell, of the oaths he had heard, and even the blows he had witnessed, when "Gibbs was more than usual excited with drink." The poor frightened wife was understood to have declared that but for her dread of what he might be driven to do in his fury, she would go before a magistrate and swear the peace against him. George could not close his ears to all this; and men said that the expression of his eyes on those occasions was not good to look upon.

One Sunday, the Eades were sitting over their frugal one o'clock dinner, when they heard the sound of a carriage driving furiously past. Mrs. Eade caught up her stick, and, in spite of her lameness, hobbled to the window.

"I thought so!" she cried. "It's Gibbs driving to Tenelms, and drunk again, seemingly. See how he's flogging of the horse. And he's got the little lad, too! He'll not rest till he've broken that child's neck, or the mother's. Simmons declares——"

She stopped, suddenly aware of her son's breath upon her cheek. He had actually come to the window, and now, leaning over her, was gazing sternly at the figures in the carriage, flying down the hill towards the Tenelms road.

"I wish he might break his own neck!" George muttered between his teeth.

"Oh, George! George! don't name such things," Mrs. Eade cried, with a pale shocked face. "It ain't Christian. We've all need of repentance, and our times is in His hand."

"If ye frequented church, my lad, 'stead of keeping away, as I grieve to see ye do," his father said, severely, "ye'd have better feelings in your heart. *They'll* never prosper ye, mark my words."

George had returned to his seat, but he rose again as his father said this. "Church!" he cried, in a loud harsh voice—"I was going there once, and it wasn't permitted. I'll go there no more. D'ye think," he continued, while his white lips trembled with uncontrollable emotion—"d'ye think, because I'm quiet, and do my work reg'lar, d'ye think I've forgotten? *Forgotten!*" He brought his clenched fist down upon the table with startling violence. "I tell ye when I forget, I'll be lying stark and stiff in my coffin! Let be—let be!" as his mother tried to interrupt him; "ye mean well, I know, but women haven't the judgment to tell when to speak, and when to hold hard. Ye'd best never name that scoundrel 'fore me again, nor yet church." With that, he went from the room and from the house,

Mrs. Eade fretted sadly over these evidences of George's rancorous and ungodly disposition. To her, he seemed to be on the high road to perdition, and she ended by sending to Mr. Murray, the rector, to beg he would be pleased to look in upon her some morning soon, as she was greatly troubled in her mind. But Mr. Murray was at that time ill, and nearly a fortnight elapsed before he was able to answer her summons. Meanwhile, other events occurred.

It was notorious that one of Mrs. Gibbs's greatest trials was about her boy, whom her husband persisted in driving out, at the risk, as every one thought, of his life. Fearful had been the scenes between the parents on this account; but the more she wept and implored, the more he resisted her entreaties. One day, to frighten her still more, he placed the little fellow, with the whip in his hand, on the carriage-seat alone, and stood at his door himself, loosely holding the reins, and jeering at his wife, who in an agony of terror kept beseeching him to get in, or to let her do so. Suddenly the report of a gun was heard in a neighbouring field; the horse took fright, and started off wildly, jerking the reins from the hands of the half-intoxicated Gibbs; the whip fell from the hands of the child on the animal's back, still further exciting it; and the boy, thrown with violence to the bottom of the carriage, lay half stunned by the shock.

George was close by when this occurred. He threw himself on the flying horse, and, seizing the bearing-rein with his whole strength, held on like grim death, in spite of being half dragged, half borne, along in its headlong flight. At last the animal, getting its legs entangled in the long trailing reins, fell with fearful violence, and lay stunned and motionless. George was thrown to the ground, but escaped with a few trifling bruises. The child at the bottom of the carriage, though frightened and screaming, was altogether uninjured. In less than five minutes half the village was collected on the spot, inquiring, congratulating, applauding; and Susan, with her rescued child clinging to her bosom, was covering George's hands with passionate tears and kisses.

"Bless you! Bless you a thousand times!" she cried, sobbing hysterically. "You've saved my darling's life! He might have been killed but for you! How can I ever——"

But a rough hand shoved her aside. "What are you after now?" Gibbs's furious voice was heard to cry, with a shocking oath. "Leave that fellow alone, or I'll——! Are you making a fool of yourself this way, because he's lamed the horse so that he'll have to be shot?"

The poor thing sank down on the bank and broke into a fit of hysterical weeping; whilst a murmur of "Shame, shame!" rose among the bystanders.

George Eade had turned coldly from Susan when she rushed up to him, and had striven to withdraw his hands from her grasp; but now, confronting Gibbs, he said, "It'll be a good deed done, whoever shoots that brute of yours, and it'd be a better still to shoot *you* as a man would a mad dog!"

All heard the words. All trembled at his look as he uttered them. The whole of the pent-up rage and resentment of the last three years seemed concentrated in that one look of savage and unutterable hatred.

Mr. Murray found poor Mrs. Eade very suffering, when, two mornings after, he called to congratulate her on her son's escape. She had not closed her eyes since the accident. George's look and words, as they had been described to her, haunted her. The good clergyman could give her but scant comfort. He had tried again and again to reason with and soften her son, but ineffectually. George answered him, with a certain rude respect, that as long as he did his work properly, and injured no man, he had a right to decide for himself in matters concerning only himself; and one of his fixed decisions was never again to see the inside of a church.

"It's a hard trial, my good friend," said Mr. Murray, "a hard and mysterious trial. But I say to you, *have faith.* There is a hidden good in it, that we can't see now."

"It'd be strange if I wasn't thankful for his being spared," Mrs. Eade replied. "It'd be worse than anything to have the dear lad took, revengeful and unforgiving as he is now. But you see, sir——"

She was stopped in her eager speech by a knock at the door. The son of Mr. Beach, the neighbouring butcher, peeped in. He scraped a bow on seeing the clergyman sitting with her, and looked from one to the other with a doubtful demeanour.

"I don't want nothing this morning, thank you, Jim," Mrs. Eade said. Then, struck with the peculiar expression of the young man's face, she added: "Ain't Mr. Beach so well this morning? You look all nohow."

"I'm—I'm a bit flustered," the youth replied, wiping his steaming forehead; "I've just been seeing *him*, and it gave me such a turn!"

"Him! who?"

"Sure! Haven't ye heard, sir? Gibbs have been found dead in Southanger Woods—murdered last night. They say——"

"Gibbs murdered!"

There was a pause of breathless horror.

"They've been carrying his corpse to the Dunstan Arms, and I see it."

Mrs. Eade turned so deadly faint that the clergyman called out hurriedly for Jemima, the servant girl. But Jemima had run out wildly on hearing the appalling intelligence, and was now midway between her master's house and the Gibbs's, listening to a knot of people, all wondering, surmising, gazing with scared eyes at that door in the high wall, the threshold of which its master would never cross again, except feet foremost.

The Eades' parlour was soon full to overflowing. Most of the dwellers on the common had congregated there—why, perhaps none would have cared to explain. Simon Eade came in among the first, and was doing his best to soothe and restore the poor fainting woman, who could hardly as yet realise what had occurred. In the midst of the confusion—the questioning, the de-

scribing of the position of the body, the rifled pockets, the dreadful blow from behind, the number of hours since the deed was done—in the midst of all this, steps were heard outside, and George came into the midst of them.

Then a sudden hush succeeded to the Babel of sounds, which he could not but have heard as he crossed the threshold. There was something ominous in that silence.

No need to ask if he knew. His face, pale as death, haggard, streaming with perspiration, proved all too plainly he was aware of the ghastly horror. But his first words, low, and uttered half unconsciously, were long after remembered:

"I WISH I'D BEEN FOUND DEAD IN THAT WOOD 'STEAD OF GIBBS!"

Various circumstances arose, one after another, that united to surround George with a kind of network of suspicion. Simon Eade sustained himself like a man, with a proud confidence in the innocence of his boy, touching even those who could not share it; and with a pious trust that Providence would yet see that innocence proved. But the poor feeble mother, shaken by ill health, half crazed by the remembrance of words and looks she would give the world to forget, could do little but weep, and utter broken supplications to Heaven.

George offered no resistance on his apprehension. Sternly, but without eagerness, he declared his innocence, and from that moment he kept entire silence. His features worked convulsively when he wrung his father's hand on parting, and gazed on the pale face of his mother, who had swooned away on seeing the police; but he soon recovered his self-possession, and accompanied the officers with a steady step, and a fixed, though gloomy countenance.

The body of the deceased had been discovered about ten A.M. by a farmer going to the Plashetts, who had been attracted to the spot by the howls of Gibbs's dog. The corpse lay among the underwood, at a short distance from the footpath leading from the stile so often mentioned, through the wood to the Plashetts, and had apparently been dragged that short distance. Evidences of a fierce struggle were visible on and around the footpath, and some blood also: which appeared to have flowed from a wound in the back of the head of the deceased, who must have been struck from behind, by some heavy, though not blunt, instrument. When found, he had been dead, according to the medical testimony, some eleven or twelve hours. The pockets were turned inside out, and the watch and a purse had been taken, as well as a seal ring.

Gibbs's two servants, James and Bridget Williams, deposed that their master had quitted his own house on the night of the murder, at twenty minutes past eight, being unusually sober; that he had set his watch, the last thing, by the kitchen clock, and had observed that he should go to the Dunstan Arms first, and afterwards to the Plashetts. That his not returning that night had occasioned no uneasiness, as he was in the habit of frequently absenting himself until morning, and had his latch-key always with him.

On the other hand, Simon Eade, his wife, and servant girl, all deposed that George returned home on the night of the murder, at nine o'clock, having been out since tea-time; that there was nothing unusual in either his manner or appearance; that he supped, and afterwards remained with his parents till ten, when the whole family retired to bed; and that he came down next morning in the sight of Jemima, who had herself risen somewhat earlier than usual.

On his left wrist was found a recent cut, which he stated had been caused by his clasp-knife slipping, as he was cutting his bread and cheese. In the same manner he sought to account for certain marks of blood on the inside of his coat sleeves and on his trousers. The only article belonging to the deceased that was found in his possession was a small lead pencil, marked with the initials "G. G." and three notches; these Job Brettle, the blacksmith, swore Gibbs had handed him the pencil to cut, on the afternoon of the murder. He (Brettle) noticed both notches and initials at the time, and could swear that the pencil in the prisoner's possession was the pencil he had cut. George maintained that he had picked it up on the common, and that he had no idea to whom it belonged.

It came out in cross-examination that a more desperate quarrel than ever, had taken place on the morning of the murder, between Mr. and Mrs. Gibbs; after which, she had been heard to declare that she could support that life no longer, and would apply for help to one who would not refuse it. That she had sent a letter soon after to George Eade, by the son of a neighbouring cottager, and had gone out herself at night, a few minutes after her husband, returning again in a quarter of an hour, more or less, when she had retired to her bedroom, and had not again quitted it until news was brought next morning of the discovery of the corpse.

When questioned by the coroner as to where she had been overnight, no reply could be elicited from her; but she fainted so frequently while under examination, that her evidence was singularly broken and incoherent.

George admitted having gone to the Southanger Woods at about twenty minutes to eight on the night of the murder; but he refused to assign any special reason for going there, declaring that he had not remained there more than a quarter of an hour at most. He stated that, as he was re-crossing the stile, he saw Gibbs and his dog at a distance, making directly for it. The moon shone almost as bright as day, and he recognised him distinctly. To avoid meeting him, he took the Dring road, and walked nearly as far as the turnpike, when he turned about, and so reached home at nine o'clock without having met a soul.

The following were (briefly) the points in the prisoner's favour:

1. The evidence of three credible witnesses that he returned home at nine o'clock, and sat down to supper without any appearance of hurry or agitation.

2. The shortness of the time in which to commit such a deed, and effectually to conceal the property taken from the deceased.

3. The high moral character born by the prisoner up to that time.

The points against him were:

1. The cut on his wrist, and marks of blood on his clothes.

2. Gibbs's pencil, found upon him.

3. The absence of testimony corroborative of his own account of his doings during the thirty minutes that intervened between Gibbs's leaving the Dunstan Arms (where he had gone straight from home) and his (George's) own return to his father's.

4. The bitter animosity he was known to cherish against the deceased, and certain words he had been heard to utter respecting him, indicating a desire for his life.

By the evidence of the landlord of the Dunstan Arms, it appeared that Gibbs had left his place to proceed to the Plashetts, at a few minutes before half-past eight o'clock. Now, it would take some four or five minutes' moderate walking for one leaving the public-house, to reach the spot where Gibbs's body was found; thus reducing the period for the murder to be committed in (if committed by George at that time) to three or four and twenty minutes, if he ran home at his full speed, or to nineteen or twenty minutes, if he walked at an average pace.

The demeanour of the prisoner before the magistrates, was stern, and even defiant; but he betrayed no emotion. He was fully committed for trial at the approaching assizes.

Meanwhile, opinion respecting him was greatly divided in Cumner. He had never been a popular man, and his extreme reserve during the last three years had alienated many who, at the period of his great trouble, had been disposed to sympathise with him. And, although he had always held a high place in public estimation, the impression that he was a man of unusually fierce passions, and implacable resentment, had gained ground of late. In short, not a few of those who knew him best, believed that, worked up to savage fury by the sufferings of the woman he had once so fondly loved, and by long brooding over his own wrongs, he had revenged both himself and her by taking the life of his enemy. He might, it was thought, have easily slipped out of his father's house in the dead of night, have waylaid and murdered Gibbs as he was returning from the Plashetts, and have secreted or destroyed the property in order to throw suspicion off the right scent.

His trial will long be remembered in those parts, as well from the intense excitement it occasioned in that particular locality, as from the strong interest manifested about it throughout the kingdom. The most eminent counsel were engaged on his behalf; and Mr. Malcolmson, who never could believe in his guilt, spared neither pains nor expense to aid his cause. He was perfectly calm when he stood in the dock, the one object on which countless eyes were eagerly riveted; but the change that had taken place in his outward seeming, struck even the most indifferent beholder with compassion, and possibly did more to impress the jury in his favour, than even the eloquence of his counsel, wonderful as that proved. For, his sufferings must have been intense. He had grown years older, during the last few weeks. His hair had thinned; his clothes hung upon his attenuated frame. He, once so ruddy and vigorous, stood there wan, haggard, drooping. Even the expression of his countenance had altered; it was stern no more.

A sound like one vast sobbing sigh went through the crowded court when the verdict, Not Guilty, was heard; but no applause, no public mark of joy or gratulation. And silently, with downcast eyes, like a doomed man, George Eade returned with one parent to the home where the other sat praying for his release.

It had been expected that, if acquitted, he would leave Cumner, and seek his fortunes elsewhere. But it was consistent with the character of the man, to brave the opinion of his fellows, and he did so in this instance. On the first Sunday, to the surprise of all, he made his appearance in church, sitting apart from the rest of the congregation, as though unwilling to obtrude himself upon them; from that time his attendance was invariable. Nor was this the only change observable in his conduct. His moroseness had passed away. He had become subdued, patient, manifesting a touching gratitude to those who treated him with common civility, as though he felt himself unworthy of their notice; unremitting in his devotion to his parents; working hard all the day; sometimes puzzling over a book at night; never alluding to the past—never forgetting it; melancholy—more melancholy than ever; but no longer bitter nor resentful. Such had George Eade become; and when men saw him at a distance, they followed him with their eyes, and asked one another in a whisper, "Did he do it?"

He and Susan never met. She long lay dangerously ill at her father's house, whither she had removed after the tragical event. And the old farmer was fitly punished for his sordid coveting of Gibbs's wealth, when it was found that the latter had settled only fifty pounds a year upon his wife, to be forfeited altogether if she should make a second marriage.

It was about a twelvemonth after these events that, one bright moonlight night, as Mr. Murray was sitting in his library alone, his servant entered to inform him that a stranger, who gave his name as Luke Williams, desired to speak with him. It was past ten o'clock, and the clergyman's hours were early and regular.

"Tell him to call to-morrow morning," said he; "this is not a fit hour for business."

"I did tell him so, sir," the man replied; "but he declared his was a business that would not wait an hour."

"Is he a beggar?"

"He didn't beg, sir; but he looks shocking, quite shocking——"

"Show him in."

The man entered; truly a shocking object. Pale, hollow-eyed, cadaverous, with a racking cough that caused him to pant and gasp for breath, he looked like one in the last stage of consumption. He gazed at Mr. Murray with a

strange and mournful expression, and Mr. Murray gazed at him.

"Well?"

The stranger glanced at the servant.

"Leave the room, Robert."

Robert did so, but remained in close proximity outside.

"This is a strange hour at which to disturb me. Have you something to say?"

"It *is* a strange hour, sir, for coming; but my reason for coming is stranger."

The man turned to the window, the curtains of which were not drawn, and gazed at the full October moon, which lighted up the quaint old church hard by, the humble gravestones, the quiet home scene, and shed a solemn glory over all.

"Well?" Mr. Murray asked once more.

But the man's eyes were fixed on the sky.

"Yes," he said, shuddering, "it shone like that—like that—the night of the—murder. It did indeed. It shone on his face—Gibbs's—as he lay there—it shone on his open eyes—I couldn't get them to shut; do what I would, they would stare at me. I've never seen moonlight like that since, till to-night. And I'm come to give myself up to you. I always felt I should, and it's better done and over. Better over."

"You murdered Gibbs? You?"

"I did. I've been there to-night, to look at the place. I felt I must see it again; and I saw his eyes, as plain as I see you, open, with the moonlight shining on them. Ah, a horrible sight!"

"You look very wild and ill. Perhaps——"

"You doubt me. I wish *I* could doubt. See here."

With a trembling emaciated hand he drew from his pocket the watch, seal ring, and purse that had belonged to Gibbs; and laid them on the table. Mr. Murray knew them.

"I used the money," said the man, faintly. "There were but a few shillings, and I was in great want."

Then he sank down on a chair with a dreadful groan.

Mr. Murray gave him a restorative, and after a time he rallied. With his hollow eyes still gazing at the moonlight, and with that ever-recurring shudder, he faltered out at intervals the following story.

He and Gibbs had been formerly associated in disreputable money transactions, which had ended in his own ruin. Being in abject distress, he had, on the promise of a considerable bribe, agreed to aid Gibbs in a plot to obtain possession of Susan's person. When she and George had separated for the fortnight previous to their contemplated marriage, the two confederates had followed her to Ormiston, and, concealing themselves in a low part of the town, had kept close watch upon her movements. Ascertaining that she was to spend the day with a cousin, they sent a woman, a creature of their own, to waylay her on her road, with a message purporting to come from George Eade, imploring her to hasten to him immediately, as he was injured by an accident on the railroad, and might have but a few hours to live. Appalled by such intelligence, the poor girl hurried to the place where the woman led her, entered without a shadow of suspicion a lonely house in the suburbs, and found herself in the presence of Gibbs and Williams, who, instantly securing the door, informed her that this subterfuge had been resorted to in order to get her into the power of the former. They told her that she was now in a place where screams would not be heeded, even if heard, and whence she would find it impossible to escape, and that she would not be quitted night or day by them or their female assistant, until she should consent to become the wife of Gibbs. Who added, with furious oaths, that had her union with George Eade taken place, he would have shot him down on his way from church.

Wild with terror and astonishment, helpless, bewildered, the girl resisted longer than might have been expected in one naturally weak. But finding herself incessantly watched, trembling, too, for her life (for Gibbs stood over her with a loaded pistol and the most furious threats), she was frightened at last into writing, at his dictation, the letters to her aunt and lover, announcing her marriage; though that event did not really take place till nearly three weeks later, when, worn out, and almost stupified into acquiescence, she was married in due form. Even then, Williams declared that she would have resisted still, but for her fears for her lover's safety. His life seemed to be dearer to her than her own happiness, and Gibbs had sworn so vehemently that his life should be the immediate forfeit of his union with her, that she felt that union would be impossible. She married, therefore, offering herself up as a kind of ransom for the man she loved. Then Williams claimed his reward.

But his worthless confederate was not one to fulfil honestly any promise involving the sacrifice of money. He paid the first of three instalments agreed upon; but constantly shirked the payment of the others, until at last, Williams finding himself in immediate danger of arrest, made his way down to the neighbourhood of Cumner, and lurking about the Southanger Woods, the deep recesses of which were well calculated for concealment, watched his opportunity, and accosted Gibbs one evening as he was driving home from Tenelms alone. That worthy, though, as usual, half drunk, recognised him at once, and swearing at him for an impudent beggar, did his best to drive his horse over him. Infuriated by such treatment, Williams wrote him a letter, declaring that if he failed to bring, on a certain night to a certain spot in Southanger Woods, every shilling of the sum he had promised to pay, he (Williams) would the very next morning go before the nearest magistrate and reveal the whole plot of Susan's abduction and marriage.

Alarmed by this threat, Gibbs answered the appointment, but without bringing the money; indeed, it soon became clear that he had no more intention of paying it than before. Williams, exasperated beyond endurance by these repeated disappointments, and rendered desperate by want, swore he would at least possess himself of whatever money or valuables the other had

about him. Gibbs resisted with fury, and a fierce struggle ensued, during which he repeatedly endeavoured to stab his opponent with his clasp-knife. At length Williams prevailed, and throwing all his strength into one supreme effort, hurled Gibbs to the ground, the back of whose head striking with fearful violence against a tree, he was killed by the force of the blow. Appalled by his own act, and by the probable consequences to himself, Williams hastily dragged the body from the footpath, rifled the pockets, and hurried away from the scene. The church clock struck ten as he emerged from Southanger Woods; he walked all that night, rested the next day in an old outhouse, and succeeded in reaching London undiscovered. But he was, almost immediately afterwards, arrested for debt, and had remained in prison until within the last few days, when he was released chiefly because he was believed to be dying of consumption. And he *was* dying, he added, despairingly. For, since that fearful night, the victim's upturned eyes had followed him everywhere—everywhere—and his life had been a burden to him.

Such was the tale, told in broken whispers in the dead of night, to the clergyman, by that miserable man: a tale impossible to doubt, and triumphantly proving the innocence of one who had been too long suspected. Before twelve o'clock next day, the whole village was ringing with the news of Williams's confession, which spread like wildfire.

George bore his triumph, as he had borne unjust suspicion. The man's character had been strangely purified in the furnace of that affliction. The awful fate of his enemy, overtaking him with the suddenness of a chastisement from Heaven, had struck George at the time with a strange compassion, as well as self-upbraiding. For, though guiltless of Gibbs's death, he was not guiltless of many and eager longings for it; and he would have given worlds to have forgiven him, as he hoped himself to be forgiven. Hence his first sad and self-accusing words in his father's house, after hearing of the murder.

It may be mentioned, by the way, that the object of the letter he had received from Susan on the morning of the fatal day, had been to implore him to call upon her father that very afternoon, and induce him to take immediate steps for effecting her separation from her husband, of whom she went in fear of her life, and by whom she was watched too closely to be able to assist herself. And as her letters were liable to be opened, she entreated George to meet her in Southanger Woods that night, in order to inform her of the result of his negotiation (which was never even entered into, as the farmer happened to be from home). Finding, however, that Gibbs was bound to the Plashetts from the public-house, she had rushed out hastily to warn George of the circumstance, and so prevent a meeting between the two, which was very near taking place.

Susan fully confirmed the testimony of Williams as to the circumstances of her abduction. That wretched man survived his confession little more than a week, and died in prison, penitent.

And once more George and Susan met. At that interview he took from his bosom a little silken bag, in which was a bunch of withered hops, so dried by time, that they almost crumbled beneath his touch. And he held them up to her.

There is a cottage on Cumner Common, not far from Simon Eade's, the walls of which are covered with roses and clematis. There you may see Susan, if not as beautiful as of yore, still fair; and happy now, with her brown-eyed baby in her arms; and, if you choose your hour, you may catch George, too, coming in to dinner or to tea, stalwart, handsome, with a bright cheery look on his honest English face, that will do you good to look upon.

VIII.

TO BE TAKEN FOR LIFE.

Sophy read through the whole of the foregoing several times over, and I sat in my seat in the Library Cart (that's the name we give it) seeing her read, and I was as pleased and as proud as a Pug-Dog with his muzzle black-leaded for an evening party and his tail extra curled by machinery. Every item of my plan was crowned with success. Our reunited life was more than all that we had looked forward to. Content and joy went with us as the wheels of the two carts went round, and the same stopped with us when the two carts stopped.

But I had left something out of my calculations. Now, what had I left out? To help you to a guess, I'll say, a figure. Come. Make a guess, and guess right. Nought? No. Nine? No. Eight? No. Seven? No. Six? No. Five? No. Four? No. Three? No. Two? No. One? No. Now I'll tell you what I'll do with you. I'll say it's another sort of figure altogether. There. Why then, says you, it's a mortal figure. No nor yet a mortal figure. By such means you get yourself penned into a corner, and you can't help guessing a *im*mortal figure. That's about it. Why didn't you say so sooner?

Yes. It was a immortal figure that I had altogether left out of my calculations. Neither man's nor woman's, but a child's. Girl's, or boy's? Boy's. "I says the sparrow, with my bow and arrow." Now you have got it.

We were down at Lancaster, and I had done two nights' more than fair average business (though I cannot in honour recommend them as a quick audience) in the open square there, near the end of the street where Mr. Sly's King's Arms and Royal Hotel stands. Mim's travelling giant otherwise Pickleson happened at the self-same time to be a trying it on in the town. The genteel lay was adopted with him. No hint of a van. Green baize alcove leading up to Pickleson in a Auction Room. Printed poster "Free list suspended, with the exception of that proud boast of an enlightened country, a free press. Schools admitted by private arrangement. No-

thing to raise a blush in the cheek of youth or shock the most fastidious." Mim swearing most horrible and terrific in a pink calico pay-place, at the slackness of the public. Serious hand-bill in the shops, importing that it was all but impossible to come to a right understanding of the history of David, without seeing Pickleson.

I went to the Auction Room in question, and I found it entirely empty of everything but echoes and mouldiness, with the single exception of Pickleson on a piece of red drugget. This suited my purpose, as I wanted a private and confidential word with him, which was: "Pickleson. Owing much happiness to you, I put you in my will for a fypunnote; but, to save trouble here's fourpunten down, which may equally suit your views, and let us so conclude the transaction." Pickleson, who up to that remark had had the dejected appearance of a long Roman rushlight that couldn't anyhow get lighted, brightened up at his top extremity and made his acknowledgments in a way which (for him) was parliamentary eloquence. He likewise did add, that, having ceased to draw as a Roman, Mim had made proposals for his going in as a conwerted Indian Giant worked upon by The Dairyman's Daughter. This, Pickleson, having no acquaintance with the tract named after that young woman, and not being willing to couple gag with his serious views, had declined to do, thereby leading to words and the total stoppage of the unfortunate young man's beer. All of which, during the whole of the interview, was confirmed by the ferocious growling of Mim down below in the pay-place, which shook the giant like a leaf.

But what was to the present point in the remarks of the travelling giant otherwise Pickleson, was this: "Doctor Marigold"—I give his words without a hope of conweying their feebleness—"who is the strange young man that hangs about your carts?"—"The strange young *man?*" I gives him back, thinking that he meant her, and his languid circulation had dropped a syllable. "Doctor," he returns, with a pathos calculated to draw a tear from even a manly eye, "I am weak, but not so weak yet as that I don't know my words. I repeat them, Doctor. The strange young man." It then appeared that Pickleson being forced to stretch his legs (not that they wanted it) only at times when he couldn't be seen for nothing, to wit in the dead of the night and towards daybreak, had twice seen hanging about my carts, in that same town of Lancaster where I had been only two nights, this same unknown young man.

It put me rather out of sorts. What it meant as to particulars I no more foreboded then, than you forebode now, but it put me rather out of sorts. Howsoever, I made light of it to Pickleson, and I took leave of Pickleson advising him to spend his legacy in getting up his stamina, and to continue to stand by his religion. Towards morning I kept a look-out for the strange young man, and what was more—I saw the strange young man. He was well dressed and well looking. He loitered very nigh my carts, watching them like as if he was taking care of them, and soon after daybreak turned and went away. I sent a hail after him, but he never started or looked round, or took the smallest notice.

We left Lancaster within an hour or two, on our way towards Carlisle. Next morning at daybreak, I looked out again for the strange young man. I did not see him. But next morning I looked out again, and there he was once more. I sent another hail after him, but as before he gave not the slightest sign of being anyways disturbed. This put a thought into my head. Acting on it, I watched him in different manners and at different times not necessary to enter into, till I found that this strange young man was deaf and dumb.

The discovery turned me over, because I knew that a part of that establishment where she had been, was allotted to young men (some of them well off), and I thought to myself "If she favours him, where am I, and where is all that I have worked and planned for?" Hoping—I must confess to the selfishness—that she might *not* favour him. I set myself to find out. At last I was by accident present at a meeting between them in the open air, looking on leaning behind a fir-tree without their knowing of it. It was a moving meeting for all the three parties concerned. I knew every syllable that passed between them, as well as they did. I listened with my eyes, which had come to be as quick and true with deaf and dumb conversation, as my ears with the talk of people that can speak. He was a going out to China as clerk in a merchant's house, which his father had been before him. He was in circumstances to keep a wife, and he wanted her to marry him and go along with him. She persisted, no. He asked if she didn't love him? Yes, she loved him dearly, dearly, but she could never disappoint her beloved good noble generous and I don't-know-what-all father (meaning me, the Cheap Jack in the sleeved waistcoat), and she would stay with him, Heaven bless him, though it was to break her heart! Then she cried most bitterly, and that made up my mind.

While my mind had been in an unsettled state about her favouring this young man, I had felt that unreasonable towards Pickleson, that it was well for him he had got his legacy down. For I often thought "If it hadn't been for this same weak-minded giant, I might never have come to trouble my head and wex my soul about the young man." But, once that I knew she loved him—once that I had seen her weep for him—it was a different thing. I made it right in my mind with Pickleson on the spot, and I shook myself together to do what was right by all.

She had left the young man by that time (for it took a few minutes to get me thoroughly well shook together), and the young man was leaning against another of the fir-trees—of which there was a cluster—with his face upon his arm. I touched him on the back. Looking up and seeing me, he says, in our deaf and dumb talk: "Do not be angry."

"I am not angry, good boy. I am your friend. Come with me."

I left him at the foot of the steps of the

Library Cart, and I went up alone. She was drying her eyes.

"You have been crying, my dear."

"Yes, father."

"Why?"

"A head-ache."

"Not a heart-ache?"

"I said a head-ache, father."

"Doctor Marigold must prescribe for that head-ache."

She took up the book of my Prescriptions, and held it up with a forced smile; but seeing me keep still and look earnest, she softly laid it down again, and her eyes were very attentive.

"The Prescription is not there, Sophy."

"Where is it?"

"Here, my dear."

I brought her young husband in, and I put her hand in his, and my only further words to both of them were these: "Doctor Marigold's last prescription. To be taken for life." After which I bolted.

When the wedding come off, I mounted a coat (blue, and bright buttons), for the first and last time in all my days, and I give Sophy away with my own hand. There were only us three and the gentleman who had had charge of her for those two years. I give the wedding dinner of four in the Library Cart. Pigeon pie, a leg of pickled pork, a pair of fowls, and suitable garden-stuff. The best of drinks. I give them a speech, and the gentlemen give us a speech, and all our jokes told, and the whole went off like a sky-rocket. In the course of the entertainment I explained to Sophy that I should keep the Library Cart as my living-cart when not upon the road, and that I should keep all her books for her just as they stood, till she come back to claim them. So she went to China with her young husband, and it was a parting sorrowful and heavy, and I got the boy I had another service, and so as of old when my child and wife were gone, I went plodding along alone, with my whip over my shoulder, at the old horse's head.

Sophy wrote me many letters, and I wrote her many letters. About the end of the first year she sent me one in an unsteady hand: "Dearest father, not a week ago I had a darling little daughter, but I am so well that they let me write these words to you. Dearest and best father, I hope my child may not be deaf and dumb, but I do not yet know." When I wrote back, I hinted the question; but as Sophy never answered that question, I felt it to be a sad one, and I never repeated it. For a long time our letters were regular, but then they got irregular through Sophy's husband being moved to another station, and through my being always on the move. But we were in one another's thoughts, I was equally sure, letters or no letters.

Five years, odd months, had gone since Sophy went away. I was still the King of the Cheap Jacks, and at a greater heighth of popularity than ever. I had had a first-rate autumn of it, and on the twenty-third of December, one thousand eight hundred and sixty-four, I found myself at Uxbridge, Middlesex, clean sold out. So I jogged up to London with the old horse, light and easy, to have my Christmas-Eve and Christmas-Day alone by the fire in the Library Cart, and then to buy a regular new stock of goods all round, to sell 'em again and get the money.

I am a neat hand at cookery, and I'll tell you what I knocked up for my Christmas-Eve dinner in the Library Cart. I knocked up a beefsteak pudding for one, with two kidneys, a dozen oysters, and a couple of mushrooms, thrown in. It's a pudding to put a man in good humour with everything, except the two bottom buttons of his waistcoat. Having relished that pudding and cleared away, I turned the lamp low, and sat down by the light of the fire, watching it as it shone upon the backs of Sophy's books.

Sophy's books so brought up Sophy's self, that I saw her touching face quite plainly, before I dropped off dozing by the fire. This may be a reason why Sophy, with her deaf and dumb child in her arms, seemed to stand silent by me all through my nap. I was on the road, off the road, in all sorts of places, North and South and West and East, Winds liked best and winds liked least, Here and there and gone astray, Over the hills and far away, and still she stood silent by me, with her silent child in her arms. Even when I woke with a start, she seemed to vanish, as if she had stood by me in that very place only a single instant before.

I had started at a real sound, and the sound was on the steps of the cart. It was the light hurried tread of a child, coming clambering up. That tread of a child had once been so familiar to me, that for half a moment I believed I was a going to see a little ghost.

But the touch of a real child was laid upon the outer handle of the door, and the handle turned and the door opened a little way, and a real child peeped in. A bright little comely girl with large dark eyes.

Looking full at me, the tiny creature took off her mite of a straw hat, and a quantity of dark curls fell all about her face. Then she opened her lips, and said in a pretty voice:

"Grandfather!"

"Ah my God!" I cries out. "She can speak!"

"Yes, dear grandfather. And I am to ask you whether there was ever any one that I remind you of?"

In a moment Sophy was round my neck as well as the child, and her husband was a wringing my hand with his face hid, and we all had to shake ourselves together before we could get over it. And when we did begin to get over it, and I saw the pretty child a talking, pleased and quick and eager and busy, to her mother, in the signs that I had first taught her mother, the happy and yet pitying tears fell rolling down my face.

THE END OF THE CHRISTMAS NUMBER FOR 1865.

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